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ASSESSMENT OF THE USAID ASSISTANCE PROGRAM TO THE REFORM OF THE BENIN PRIMARY EDUCATION SYSTEM

AUGUST 2005

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Assessment of the USAID Assistance Program to the Reform of the Benin Primary Education System

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Dedication to Development since 1984
economics • education • environment • gender

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Glossary

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| ACEF/World Learning | Action Communautaire pour l'Education des Filles / Community action for girls' education; World Learning |
| AFD/ADB | African Development Fund / African Development Bank |
| AME | Association des Mères d'Elèves / Association of Mothers |
| APE | Association des Parents d'Elèves / Association of Parents of Students |
| ATA | Atacora |
| AT | Assistant Technique |
| ATL-LITT | Atlantique-Littoral |
| BAC | Baccalauréat / secondary school leaving exam |
| BEPC | Brevet d'Etudes du Premier Cycle; First cycle of secondary school degree |
| BET | Basic Education Team, USAID/Benin's Education Strategic Objective Team |
| BORG-ALI | Borgou-Alibori |
| CAP | Certificat d'Aptitude Pédagogique/Primary School Teaching Certificate |
| CCA/ENI | Cellule de Coordination des Activités pour la Réouverture des ENI/Coordination for the Reopening of Teacher Training Centers |
| CCS | Chef de Circonscription Scolaire / School District Inspector |
| CD | Centre de Documentation / Documentation Center |
| CE1 | Cours Elémentaire, first year (3 rd grade) |
| CE2 | Cours Elémentaire, second year (4 th grade) |
| CEAP | Certificat Elémentaire d'Aptitude Pédagogique / Elementary Certificate of Pedagogical Aptitude |
| CEP | Certificat d'Etudes Primary / Certificate of Primary Studies |
| CFPEEN | Centre de la Formation des Personnels d'Encadrement de l'Éducation Nationale / National Training Center for Education Personnel |
| CGNPE | Cellule de Généralisation des Nouveaux Programmes d'Etudes / Cell for the Generalization of New Study Programs |
| CI | Cours d'Initiation (1 st grade) |
| CLAC | Center de Lecture et d'Animation Culturelle/Cultural Reading Center |
| CLEF | Children's Learning and Equity Foundation |
| CM1 | Cours Moyen, first year (5 th grade) |
| CM2 | Cours Moyen, second year (6 th grade) |
| COP | Chief of Party |
| CP | Conseiller Pédagogique / Pedagogical Counselor |
| CP | Cours Préparatoire (2 nd grade) |

| | |
|----------|---|
| CS | Circonscription Scolaire / School District |
| CTO | Cognizant Technical Officer |
| DEP | Directeur de l'Enseignement Primaire / Director of Primary Education |
| DIEM | Direction des Infrastructures de l'Equipement et de la Maintenance / Directorate of Infrastructure, Equipment and Maintenance |
| D/INFRE | Director, National Institute for Training and Research in Education (INFRE) |
| DIR | Director |
| DPP | Direction de la Programmation et de la Prospective ; Planning Directorate |
| DRH | Direction des Ressources Humaines ; Directorate of Human Resources |
| ENI | Ecole Normale of d'Instituteurs ; Normal School—Teacher Training Center |
| EPP | Ecole Primaire Publique ; Public Primary School |
| EQF | Ecole de Qualité Fondamentale ; Fundamental Quality School |
| EQUIPE | Equity and Quality in Primary Education |
| GOB | Government of Benin |
| HEPS | Health Education for Primary Schools (MCDI Project) |
| IDA | (World Bank) International Development Agency |
| IDB | Islamic Development Bank |
| IFESH | International Foundation for Education and Self-Help |
| INFRE | Institut National pour la Formation et la Recherche en Education / National Institute for Training and Research in Education |
| MCDI | Medical Care Development International |
| MEN | Ministère de l'Education Nationale / Ministry of National Education |
| MEPS | Ministère des Enseignements Primaire et Secondaire / Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education |
| MTT West | Mobile Task Team West (HIV/AIDS organization) |
| NGO | Non Governmental Organization |
| NPE | Nouveaux Programmes d'Etudes / New Study Programs |
| PAFT | Projet d'Appui à la Formation Technique / Project for Support of Technical Training |
| PAGE | Projet d'Appui à la Gestion de l'Education / Project for Support of Educational Managment |
| RAP | Réseau d'Animation Pédagogique ; Teacher Network |
| Rés. Doc | Réseau Documentaire ; Documentation Network |
| RNPSF | Réseau National pour la Promotion de la Scolarisation des Filles / National Network for the Promotion of Girls' Education |
| SG | Secrétaire Général / General Secretary |
| UNICEF | United Nations Children's Funds |

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| UP | Unité Pédagogique (school level training groups) |
| USAID | United States Agency for International Development |

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Executive Summary

By the late 1980s, teaching quality had been gravely weakened and the educational system was in a state of near total collapse. In 1990, Benin instituted a democratic regime after 18 years of Marxist-Leninist military rule. From 1991 onward, Benin's educational system underwent considerable revitalization due to the reestablishment of democracy, from changes resulting from International Monetary Fund and World Bank structural adjustment programs, and from the primary teaching reforms supported by USAID. After the first years of primary education system reform, USAID's efforts have been focused on the experimentation and implementation of a primary school competency-based approach called the "New Study Program" (NPE).

At the end of the 1980s, school enrollment rates had declined for the first time in Benin's history. In 1990, there were only 418,000 students. This downward trend was reversed by the early to mid-1990s, and since that time enrollment rates have continued to increase. In 2000, 932,000 students were enrolled, and by 2004, there were 1.3 million students. The constant and regular increase in access indicates that this positive trend is likely to continue.

USAID has greatly contributed to the advancement of Benin's educational system. In terms of pedagogical reforms, major results are as follows :

- The design of the new study program (NPE) in its experimental and full implementation phases.
- Development and production of primary school textbooks and teacher guides and distribution of these materials throughout the country.
- Development and implementation of teacher training plans; annual NPE teacher training sessions; in-service teacher training; retraining for current teachers and reinforcement of teacher networks; technical-vocational training programs; and training on equity in the classroom and on HIV/AIDS.

At the institutional level, USAID has supported the following:

- Systematic planning and an organizational structure for defining a program of primary education reform.
- Computerized management of school statistics and the production of education statistics yearbook with data aggregated at the national and provincial levels.
- Development of *Fundamental Quality Schools* (EQF), a planning tool for school development.
- A system of financial management based on budgeted programs; reform of the ministry's human resources management system and a training plan for ministry personnel management.
- Community and school-based programs and capacity building for parent associations.

The Government of Benin, with the support of USAID and its partners, has successfully promoted girls' education in Benin. Due to the combined impact of various programs, girls' enrollment, retention, and success in school is on the rise. However, in Benin, as in other countries that have rapidly expanded access to primary education, increased enrollment has placed enormous strains on the central government and localities. This pressure has resulted from the need to build new classrooms, from overcrowded school conditions, from lack of teachers, and from the inability of the system to provide school infrastructure and materials.

Moreover, there remain continuing dysfunctions in Benin's education system. These have been exacerbated by persistent strike activity among teachers, effectively disrupting education within the public sector over the last five years.

There are many constraints to quality, but these can generally be summarized in terms of continuing weaknesses in the ministry's institutional capacity and in the involvement of communities in school affairs. School organization and management therefore suffers enormously from the fact that instructions emanating from the top are often neither coherent nor monitored in their application. The politicization of the educational administration constitutes another brake on quality, meaning human resources are not being used optimally.

Rural schools are generally of lesser quality than those in urban centers. Rural teachers are generally less qualified, and work within a context of material disadvantage in terms of the school infrastructure, furniture, and teaching materials, as well as in terms of sociocultural stress. In general, private schools, which are concentrated in urban areas, produce better results, but these schools are reserved for the small proportion of the population that have the means to pay for education. In all schools, we found that teachers had only a vague understanding of the use of formative and summative evaluation, and that only summative evaluation was practiced.

The academic level required to teach the new program is relatively high, and this constitutes a problem in a system in which the basic level of education of many instructors is low. Furthermore, there has been no systematic pre-service training in Benin for a number of years. The freeze on recruitment in the public sector during the first program of structural adjustment led to a series of closures of teacher training centers between 1987 and 1996, and delivered a fatal blow to the quality of pre-service teachers training. The new school year 2005 – 2006 opens the possibility for in-service training that will be revived by the opening of three teacher training centers. In the medium term, there will be six centers, which will train 1,800 teachers annually. In-service training generally occurs during specific seasons throughout the country, with the exception of the school districts that partner with a USAID-financed NGO, where training is rigorously planned and monitored.

While USAID/Benin's impacts at the national level are significant, they are even greater at the local level. Local associations, particularly parents' associations are better prepared and have established networks at the provincial and national levels. Moreover, in certain communities a variety of organizations are now involved in the debates on education.

Although some communities are clearly active with respect to education issues, many are not. Certain limitations are persistent and warrant particular attention in the context of decentralization. The integration of local government (*communes*) into the national education system is complex. The vision of a centralized school system clashes with one of the school as a responsibility of local government, and the development of local schools is tightly intertwined with local sociocultural and economic realities. At the school inspector level, there is a lack of administrative competence among personnel, and this situation adversely affects education sector management at decentralized levels. Moreover, newly adopted procedures have placed additional burdens on school inspectors, few of whom are qualified in the area of financial management. At the school level, there is a lack of teachers; buildings and furniture are dilapidated, and working conditions for teachers and students are inadequate. Schools should therefore be endowed with the capacity to manage their own budgets, which would allow them to more effectively respond to these various problems.

In our recommendations to USAID/Benin, we propose activities in eight areas: 1) teacher training; 2) curriculum; 3) student assessment; 4) linkage between primary and secondary schools; 5) system management, emphasizing decentralization and communication; 6) community development; 7) equity; and 8) HIV/AIDS education.

Specifically, we propose the following:

- 1 Establish a framework for the organization, functions, administration, and curriculum design for teacher training centers;
- 2 Support the implementation of teacher training centers;
- 3 Revitalize teacher networks (*Réseau d'Animation Pédagogique*);
- 4 Reinforce the capacities of the inspectorates through close collaboration with USAID partners;
- 5 Simplify curricula and guides in terms of language and volume to better adapt them to the level of students and teachers;
- 6 Provide practical training for teachers in the execution and use of results of student assessment;
- 7 Institutionalize a coherent and systematic communications program on education in general including the objectives of the reform targeting teachers and members of civil society;
- 8 Reinforce and facilitate collaboration between local authorities and the education system;
- 9 Support and facilitate collaboration with women's associations to further increase girls' opportunities in education; develop and generalize, in those zones with weak rates of girls' education, a system of mentoring and tutoring; plan and implement strategies for the education of other disadvantaged groups;
- 10 Expand awareness raising within the educational system on the prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS.

I. Introduction and Context

Since the early 1990s, the United States Agency for International Development in Benin (USAID/Benin) has been assisting the Government of Benin (GOB) in the implementation of educational reform. Since the late 1990s, USAID has provided technical and financial assistance in the design and implementation of the New Study Program (NPE). The strategic objective (SO) of USAID/Benin is “More Children Receive a Quality Basic Education on an Equitable Basis.” Three issues are at the heart of USAID/Benin’s strategic objectives for education in Benin: access, equity, and quality.

The purpose of this evaluation is to assess the impact of USAID/Benin’s assistance to date, determining strengths and weaknesses in the implementation of the NPE to identify areas of future intervention. Further, the evaluation addresses past, present and anticipated future constraints to USAID/Benin’s education program interventions. One issue of particular concern is the impact of USAID/Benin’s activities on the final beneficiaries: children, parents, teachers, directors, and communities at large. This includes assessing, for example, the impact of USAID/Benin’s teacher training programs, children’s acquisition of knowledge and competencies through the NPE, and the increased role of parents and communities in school management. Finally, the evaluation concludes with recommendations for both the short-term and for the next education planning cycle.

Issues addressed in this evaluation are examined primarily through qualitative data collection and analysis. Specifically, the team conducted key informant and focus group interviews with a variety of actors involved in the NPE. Key informants included USAID/Benin’s development partners in the education sector, and Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MEPS) officials involved in Benin’s educational reform, particularly those directly responsible for the design and implementation of the NPE. In addition, focus group interviews were conducted with the main beneficiaries of USAID’s education intervention including school directors, teachers, and parents. Although children were not interviewed for this evaluation, they were informally addressed and observed when team members visited schools.

The team then synthesized their observations and findings to identify points of commonality and difference across various geographic contexts (e.g. north/south, rural/urban, small/large cities, etc.). This approach facilitates triangulation of findings across various perspectives to ensure a robust review and recommendation. Finally, it allows for generalization while simultaneously accounting for differences in context that may influence the impact of USAID/Benin’s education interventions.

I.1 National Context

Benin is located on the west coast of Africa. It covers 112,600 Km², and in 2004 had an estimated population of 6.5 million inhabitants, with more than 70% of its population in rural zones. Benin has twelve provinces (*departments*), divided into 77 *communes* and 1249 neighborhoods (*arrondissements*). In 1990, Benin instituted a democratic regime after 18 years of Marxist-Leninist military rule. The rate of illiteracy in 2004 was approximately 70%. Benin is classed as 157th among 174 countries in the UN’s human development index of 2000.

The late 1980s have gravely weakened educational quality in Benin. During this period, the Marxist regime was coming to an end, and gross enrollment rates were in decline for the first time. October 1990 saw a major turning point in Benin's educational reform. Etats Généraux de l'Éducation (EGE) adopted a national strategy for improving teaching from the priority recommendations of the *Conférence Nationale des Forces Vives*, held the previous February. From 1991 onward, Benin's educational system underwent considerable revitalization. Several factors enabled this improvement to occur: the reestablishment of democracy, changes resulting from International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank structural adjustment programs, and primary teaching reforms supported by USAID's Children's Learning and Equity Foundation (CLEF) program and its subsequent Equity and Quality in Primary Education (EQUIPE) program.¹ From the beginning, these programs were able to convince parents once again to send their children to school. The programs later targeted the improvement of the learning environment while at the same time increasing opportunities for access to schools. As a consequence of these initiatives, by 1993 school enrollments had reached levels comparable to those prior to the collapse of the educational system.

Since the first years of primary education system reform, USAID's efforts have been focused on the experiment and implementation of the "New Study Program" (NPE), which employs a competency-based approach. USAID continues its technical and financial assistance to MEPS, through the intermediary of the EQUIPE Project, in the generalization of the NPE. This program is implemented by MEPS's Cell for the Generalization of the New Study Program (CGNPE). By school year 2004-2005, the NPE was fully implemented through the 6th grade (CM2).

Primary gross enrollment rates in Benin have doubled since 1992, even though the amount of money spent per student has been cut by about half during the same period. Currently, only 16% of the state's budget is spent on education. This compares with an average investment in education of 24% in the region's francophone countries. Moreover, in a country in which primary students comprise 74% of the school-age population, only 36% of the total educational budget is allocated to the primary education system. Benin currently spends 2.9% of its of gross national product (GNP) on education. This amount is less than half of the 6% of GNP that a recent World Bank study indicates is necessary to finance education for all.² Moreover, the country's Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MEPS) is usually incapable of spending its allocated budget. For example, only 40% of its investment allocation of approximately \$9.4 million was actually spent during the 2000-2001 school year.

I.2 USAID's education program

USAID supports other interventions helping the government of Benin (GOB) improve the quality of teaching. Other USAID partners, notably the Peace Corps and American NGOs such as the International Foundation for Education and Self-Help (IFESH), World Education, World Learning, MCDI, and a national NGO called SONGHAI, have substantially contributed to sustaining Benin's educational reform program.

¹ Benin was able to implement its national educational reform program largely due to assistance from USAID. USAID has provided both technical and financial support.

² *Rapport d'Etat sur le Système Éducatif Béninois*, World Bank, January 2002.

NGOs and principal areas of intervention

| NGOs or Government Agency | Project | Principal areas of intervention |
|----------------------------------|----------------|--|
| SONGHAI (Local NGO) | | Technical training for young farmers and out-of-school youth in agrobiological and entrepreneurship |
| IFESH | PETTP | In-service training of primary school teachers. |
| WORLD EDUCATION | PENGOP | Capacity building of parent associations for participating in school management. Creation of Mothers' Associations |
| CARE INTERNATIONAL | PROBASE | Promotion of primary school access, particularly for girls, in the target communes of Kalalé and of Gogounou. |
| WORLD LEARNING | CAGE | Support for 90 communities with low rate of girls' enrollment for out-of-school interventions |
| MCDI | HEPS | Promotion of sanitary education in primary schools in conjunction with parent associations and NGOs |
| MEPS | GLOBE | Promotion of primary and secondary students' knowledge of the environment and of scientific methods through a worldwide project of monitoring environmental change |

1.3 Other financial and technical partners

Nearly 200 NGOs and associations have been identified as social development partners, and of these approximately twenty are particularly active in the education sector. USAID contributes substantially to financing the activities of these NGOs, which also receive support from the Netherlands, Germany, and certain national NGOs.

For the past several years, the Beninese educational system has benefited from the support of numerous financial and technical partners. These partners have implemented several projects and programs, which offer Beninese children the opportunity to receive a quality education that is useful for daily life. The partners that currently intervene in the different sub-sectors of basic education are the following: USAID, Japan, Denmark, Belgium, France, Germany, Switzerland, as well as multilateral organizations such as the Fund for African Development/ African Development Bank (ADF/ADB), the Islamic Development Bank (IDB), Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), the United Nations Population Fund (UNPF), and the International Development Agency (IDA).

Total estimated commitments by these other partners for 2001-2007 in primary, secondary, and vocational-technical education is 47.2 billion CFA francs (US \$87.4 million), of which 31.8 billion FCFA (\$58.9 m.) goes to the direct support of the MEPS budget. Although Denmark, Switzerland, the IDA and the ADB provide targeted budgetary support, the essential support provided by most financial and technical partners to the education sector is project-based. As shown in the following chart, the principal areas of intervention are: girls' education, HIV/AIDS education, classroom construction, and pedagogical support:

Areas of partner intervention in the education sector (2001-2007)

| Partner | Principal areas of intervention |
|--------------------|---|
| USAID | New Study Program, girls' education, involvement of parents in schools, management of school system resources |
| Peace Corps | Promotion of girls' education and improvement of students' knowledge of the environment |
| Japan | School construction and equipment |
| Denmark | Primary education, vocational training, integration of handicapped children in schools |
| Belgium | School construction (Atacora and Mono) |
| France | Vocational and technical training, educational management, technical assistance (Projet d'Appui à la Formation Technique – PAFT; Projet d'Appui à la Gestion de l'Education – PAGE) |
| Germany (GTZ) | Vocational training and apprenticeship |
| ADF/ADB | School construction |
| IDB | School construction |
| OPEC | School construction |
| UN Population Fund | Girls' education, school cafeterias, HIV/AIDS |
| IDA | School rehabilitation, promotion of girls' education, improvement of educational management capacity, provision of school textbooks, recruitment of teachers, budgetary support to the education sector |
| Suisse | Literacy, vocational training and apprenticeships |
| UNICEF | Girls' education, community participation |
| European Union | Vocational training, school/class construction |

I.4 USAID activities in the education sector***I.4.1 Pedagogical support***

USAID has funded the following educational activities in Benin:

- The design of the new study program (NPE) in its experimental and full implementation phases.
- Development of primary school textbooks and teacher guides in conformity with the NPE.
- Development and implementation of teacher training plans.
- Annual NPE teacher training sessions.
- In-service teacher training.
- Retraining for current teachers and reinforcement of teacher networks (Réseau d'Animation Pédagogique—RAP) initiated by IFESH, an American voluntary organization.
- A hygiene education program developed by MCDI, an international NGO, but not yet integrated into the school curriculum.
- A technical-vocational training program implemented by SONGHAI, a local NGO.

- A global program for the study and observation of the environment (GLOBE) implemented in 108 schools (primary and secondary) throughout the country by the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MEPS);
- Teacher training on equity in the classroom (EDC);
- A girls' mentoring program financed by USAID and implemented by the Peace Corps.

1.4.2 Institutional Reform

The following activities have been conducted with the support and collaboration of Project CLEF, and its successor project, EQUIPE:

- Systematic planning and an organizational structure for defining a program of primary education reform.
- Collection and diffusion of education statistics yearbook with data aggregated at the national and provincial (*departemental*) levels.
- Development of *Fundamental Quality Schools* (EQF), a planning tool for school development.
- Computerized management of school statistics.
- A national school mapping system, comprised of EQF data, developed and used for planning purposes.
- A ten-year plan for educational development developed in 1996 has served to provide the working structure for partner "roundtables" and for their involvement in sector development activities.
- Development of a national Education for All (EFA) plan in 2003, which serves as a framework for a variety of sector development projects.
- A system of financial management based on budgeted programs with well-defined procedures in place.
- Reform and production of a procedural manual on the education sector's human resources management system.
- A training plan for ministry personnel management that has been developed, edited and implemented; training in planning and in school administration for school inspectors and pedagogical counselors (CP)
- A program of parent association capacity building, implemented by an international NGO (World Education).
- Community and school based programs, implemented by CARE and World Learning.

With the improvement of learning conditions, the gross enrollment rate (GER) for girls has increased from 42.7% in 1992 to 84.3% in 2004, with the GER for boys increasing from 75.3% in 1992 to 108.0% in 2004.³

³ Data from annual statistics report, MEPS 2003-04; Other ratios are as follows 51.6 students per teacher in 2004; Textbook ratios per students, beginning 2004 school year: CI: 0.86; CP: 1.07; CE1: 1.0; CE 2: 0.98; CM1: 0.80; CM2: 0.39 (A ratio of 1.0 assumes approximately one French textbook and one math textbook for two students.) Current (2005) ratio for CM2 is estimated at approximately 1.0.

II. Findings

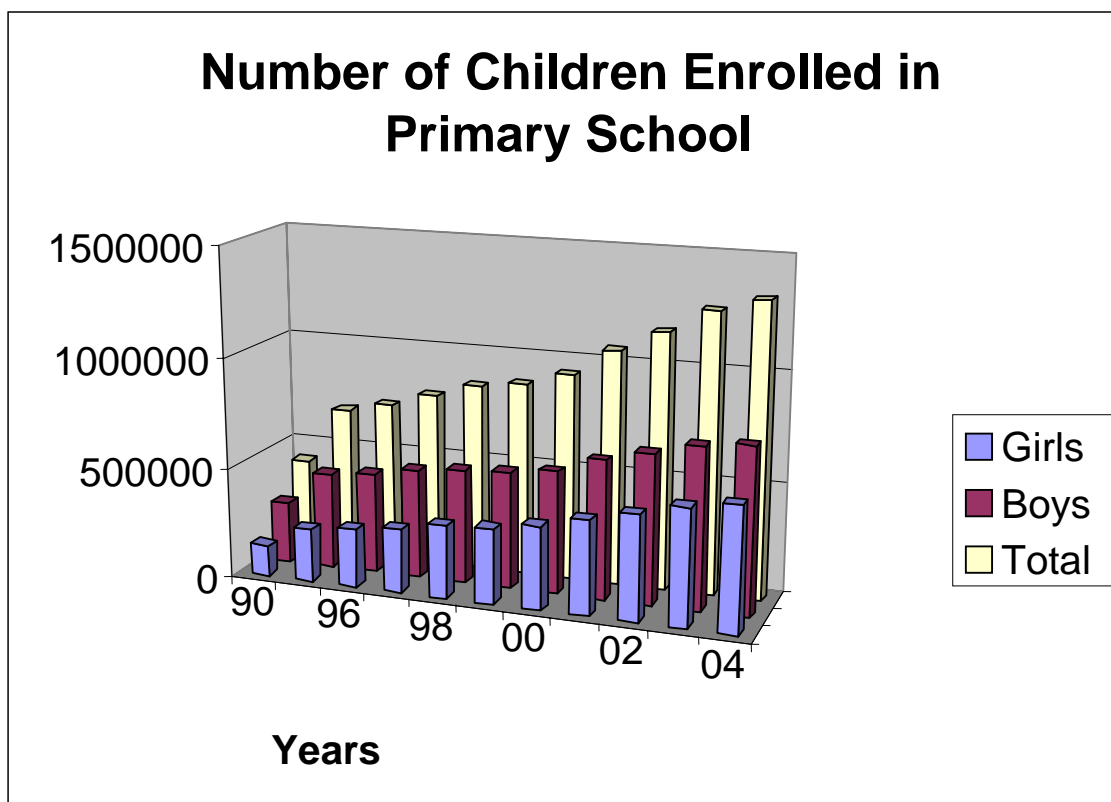
II.1 Strategic objective

USAID support for the Beninese educational system is articulated through its strategic objective (SO), “More Children Receive a Quality Basic Education on an Equitable Basis,” and a series of Intermediate Results (IR). Below, we examine the evolution of the three principal components of the SO, namely access, equity, and quality:

II.2 Access

At the end of the 1980s, school enrollment rates declined for the first time in Benin’s history. In 1990, there were only 418,000 students. This downward trend was reversed by the early to mid-1990s, and since that time enrollment rates have continued to increase. In 2000, 932,000 students were enrolled, and by 2004, there were 1.3 million students. The constant and regular increase in access indicates that this positive trend is likely to continue.

Number of Children Enrolled in Primary School (1990-2004)



Gross enrollment rates (GER) for girls and boys confirm this evolution, but also show continuing disparities in terms of gender. As indicated below, from 1998 through 2003, the gap between girls and boys remained at about 30%.

Gross Enrollment Rates—1998-2003

| Year | 1998 | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 |
|-----------|-------|-------|-------|--------|--------|--------|
| GER (G/B) | 60/91 | 61/91 | 66/95 | 72/104 | 77/108 | 82/114 |

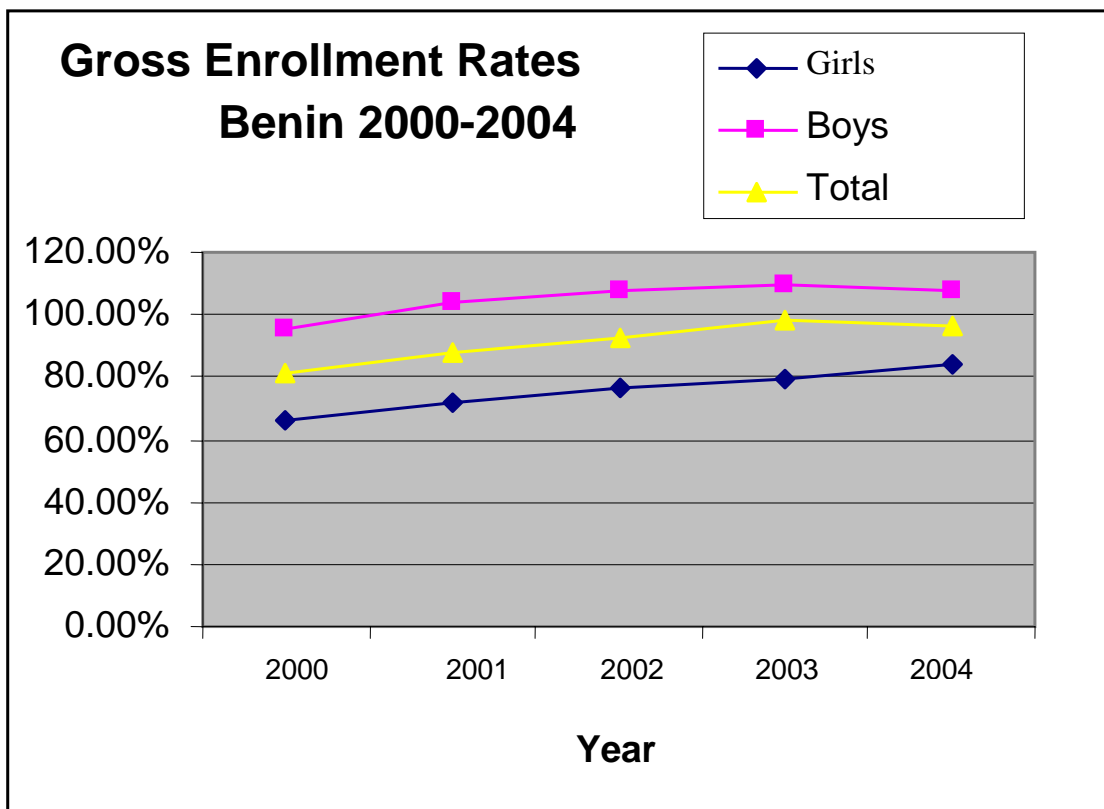
Source: Statistical Services, DPP/MEPS

Efforts geared toward promoting girls' access to education have also positively impacted boys, but the statistics indicate that the struggle for girls' access must be maintained, especially in rural zones. Our site visits confirmed these trends and revealed that for financial or cultural reasons, a substantial number of girls are either deprived of an education or drop out before finishing primary school.

Promotion and dropout rates also have an important impact on access—parents are less likely to send their children to school if children are at risk of dropping out. Conversely, successful children are more likely to be sent to school. Improvement of access therefore is to some extent dependent on quality, and therefore we believe that improving quality in education should be a major focus of USAID interventions in Benin in the years to come.

II.3 Equity**II.3.1 Increased enrollment of girls in target areas**

As indicated in the first part of this section, a quantitative assessment of gross enrollment rate (GER) for girls indicates increases throughout Benin. A more qualitative and nuanced examination reveals ongoing problems within certain contexts. Differences are apparent between rural and urban settings and between the northern and southern parts of the country.

Gross Enrollment Rates 2000-2004

Girls' education in Benin has witnessed a strong evolution through USAID's work with the Government of Benin and with partners such as CARE, World Learning, World Education, and the National Network for the Promotion of Girls' Education. The combined impact of the aforementioned entities' activities has been an increase in girls' enrollment, retention, and promotion in schools throughout the country. Increased enrollment levels are apparent for both boys and girls and the gap between these two groups is closing.

In addition, increasing levels of community awareness and participation in promoting girls' education have resulted in improved retention and performance in school. Indeed, today more of Benin's schoolgirls are getting good grades and are even among the top students in their classes, which is a significant and new accomplishment in some rural areas.

Challenges remain despite these tremendous successes in promoting girls' education. With respect to enrollment and retention, parents perceive the opportunity cost of girls' education to be high. This is because, especially in terms of marriage prospects, girls are seen as an economic resource to the family. In addition, it is often difficult for parents, community members and girls themselves to perceive the benefits of education. Girls appear to be relegated to the same roles as in the past due not only to the current gender division of labor but also to a lack of new female role models, particularly in rural areas.⁴ The problem of girls' low enrollment impacts the role of school directors, who in addition to teaching their own classes and managing the school, must work with parent associations to increase both female and general student enrollment.

Promotion and dropout rates vary by social context, but from our observations, the problem of dropouts affects both girls and boys. Nonetheless, it is clear that parents in rural areas were especially hesitant to send their girls to secondary school.

One indication of gender equity during classroom observations was that both girls and boys acted as reporters for their groups. This suggests that children of both sexes have equal opportunities to express themselves before the class and to take leadership roles within their groups. Although all directors and teachers interviewed indicated application of gender equity in classrooms, responses were considerably different when talking about the gender division of labor. Many respondents had difficulty imagining occupations other than those traditionally reserved for women. This was less of a problem in southern urban areas where the professional opportunities open to women are more varied.

Access to education for most girls in Benin is not a major problem. Rising consciousness throughout the country of the benefits of sending girls to school is due in large part due to the support of such NGOs as CARE (Probase), World Education (ATAPE and AME), and World Learning (CAGE). Opportunities for girls education continue to increase, notwithstanding some pockets of resistance where the sociocultural pressures still prevent a large number of girls from going to school.

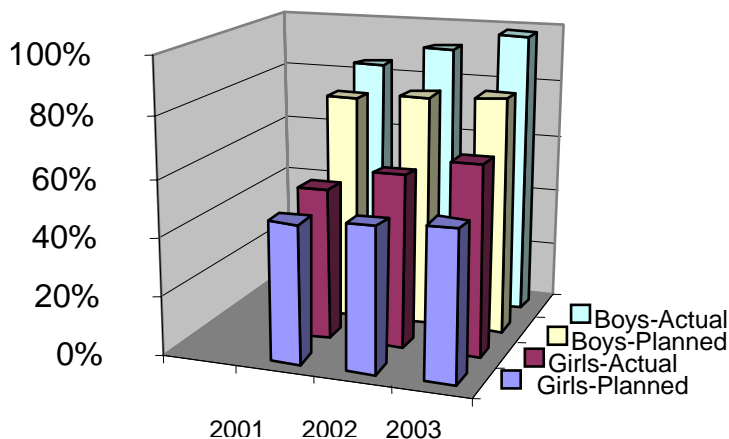
Patterns of girls' retention and promotion follow the same tendency as with access. More girls finish the primary cycle and obtain their certificate of primary studies (CEP). For example, in Gogounou, which is a commune that benefits from USAID support through the

⁴ When asked what girls' might do with their education many restricted their responses to classic female oriented occupations including nursing, sewing and hairdressing. In certain areas, the argument for sending daughters to school is that they will be better homemakers and mothers if they know how to read and write.

CARE/Probase and IFESH/PETTP projects, 196 girls (69% of girls) obtained their CEP compared to 229 boys (64% of boys). Nevertheless, it is imperative to continue pressure because girls are more productive at home and thus more prone to demands to drop out of school.

Change in Gross Enrollment in USAID Target Areas (2001-03)

Change in Gross Enrollment in USAID Target Areas



Equity is often expressed in terms of the promotion of girls' education. However there are several other aspects of equity that are as important, notably the questions of educational opportunities for handicapped children, geographical differences between urban and rural locations, and the contrast between private and public schools.

Beninese schools do not systematically serve the handicapped. There are a few specialized centers, but these do not satisfy the overall needs in terms of demand or curriculum, nor in terms of the physical layouts of schools. The school system therefore does not encourage success for handicapped children.

Rural schools are generally of lesser quality than those in urban centers. Rural teachers are generally less qualified and work within a context of material disadvantage in terms of the school infrastructure, furniture, teaching materials, as well as in terms of sociocultural stress.

USAID support since 1992 has enabled a remarkable evolution in terms of equity; its interventions have contributed to results, particularly within the public education system (teachers, curriculum, and teaching materials) and through the improved capacity of grassroots associations (e.g., APE, AME) and of local collectives.

II.4 Quality

The quality of education can be expressed in terms of curriculum, personnel, material conditions, and internal and external efficiency.

Through the CLEF and EQUIPE Projects, USAID has participated in a significant way in the development and successive revisions of primary level study programs. The large majority of teachers have been trained or retrained in new pedagogical approaches. USAID funding has also supported qualitative improvements in the curriculum and the provision of a sufficient quantity of school textbooks and other teaching materials.

In terms of internal efficiency, rates of retention have increased while grade repetition and dropouts, especially those of girls, have decreased. These tendencies will likely lead to an overall increase in the quality of workers on the job market.

The major constraints to quality are inadequate institutional capacity on the part of the ministry and the involvement of communities in school affairs. School organization and management therefore suffer enormously from the fact that instructions emanating from the top are often neither coherent nor monitored in their application. The politicization of the educational administration further inhibits quality, thereby preventing optimal use of human resources. The absence of long-term organizational planning and vision also inhibits the programming of activities. One recent example is that until July 2005, the position of MEPS on the follow-up to educational reforms was not seriously discussed until the 160,000 CEP candidates educated under the new study program were preparing to enter secondary schools in October 2005. It is likely therefore that there will be serious difficulties that compromise school quality as a result of the lack of communication on the part of MEPS.

II.5 Evaluation of the Implementation of the New Study Program (NPE)

The implementation of the New Study Programs (Nouveaux Programmes d'Etudes—NPE), a primary education reform, began in 1996 in some thirty and private public experimental schools. With the generalization of the program, USAID financed the production of the following teaching materials:

- Curricula for six subject areas (French, mathematics, science and technology, social education, art education, and physical education);
- Teachers' guides for each of the six subjects;
- Student assessment guides for teachers;
- Training guides for teacher trainers;
- French and mathematics textbooks for 1st through 6th grades (CI – CM2)
- French and math workbooks for 1st through 2nd grades (CI and CP).

These materials were produced based on projected needs for each year and were delivered to MEPS as follows:

Educational Materials Delivered (1999-2004)

| Year Materials | 1999(CI) | 2000(CP) | 2001(CE1) | 2002(CE2) | 2003(CM1) | 2004(CM2) |
|----------------------------------|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Teacher trainer guides | 5000 | 5000 | 5000 | 5000 | 5000 | 4000 |
| Curriculum (Study Program) | 10000 | 10 000 | 10000 | 10000 | 8000 | 8000 |
| Teachers' | 10000 | 10000 | 10000 | 10000 | 8000 | 8000 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|-------|
| guides | | | | | | |
| Textbooks (for each subject area) | 170000 | 170000 | 170000 | 170000 | 100000 | 90000 |
| Workbooks | 340000 | 340000 | | | | |
| Wall charts | 5000 | 5000 | | | | |

These materials were produced in Benin, according to the NPE implementation schedule (starting with 1st grade materials in 1999 through 6th grade in 2004), and were distributed at no cost to beneficiaries. The Beninese government covers transportation costs for each year after the first year for each grade level.

II.5.1 Qualitative assessment

As the evaluation report of the 1st and 2nd grade education programs indicates,⁵ system stakeholders generally appreciate the NPE educational objectives and approach. Certain among them indicated that with time, they progressively discovered many advantages of the approach and its impacts on children's behavior. Nevertheless, the contents of the materials are not completely adapted to the current intellectual level of the teachers and students.

According to the previous evaluation and our respondents, the materials sometimes provide insufficient explanations or lack coherence. Also, certain respondents indicated that the documents are too voluminous given the actual time for study during the year. Moreover, despite the fact that all teachers we interviewed execute the NPE, this is often done without discernment and monitoring. Few teachers take initiative; rather, the majority of them wait for instructions from the central level. Moreover, the frequent overcrowding of classrooms tends to make learning difficult.

II.5.2 Quantitative assessment

Compared with the situation previous to the current reforms, the number of teaching materials has greatly expanded.

The planned result was to achieve the following ratios:

- Two teachers' guides and two programs per subject at each school (one for the teacher and one for the principal);
- Two workbooks per student (one French and one mathematics);
- One French and one mathematics textbook per two students;
- Two wall chart kits per class.

The planned quantity of documents was delivered by USAID, but there exists some variation in the availability of educational materials among schools. In some schools, there are sufficient materials or even a surplus, but often materials are insufficient. Several reasons explain this lack:

⁵ Charles J. Tesar, William Lee, Carrie Lewis, Nzal Alimasi, and Dacia Van Antwerp, 2003. «Evaluation des Nouveaux Programmes d'Etudes au Cours d'Initiation (CI) et au Cours Préparatoire (CP) » in *Evaluation de la Composante Pédagogique de la Réforme de l'Education de Base au Bénin*. DevTech Systems for USAID, AEP-I-811-00-00022-00.

- Weakness of information systems (the school statistics are often unreliable, causing a lack or surplus of materials in schools);
- Lack of knowledge about the number of private schools and the number of teachers and students in these schools. Private schools in particular are ignored or neglected;
- Weakness of distribution networks and resulting materials loss at all levels;
- Poor conservation and non-rigorous management of materials.

II.6 Comparison between public and private schools

We did not directly observe NPE implementation in private schools during the course of the present evaluation and therefore can make only limited comments on the effectiveness of these programs as executed in the classroom.⁶ We do know, however, that according to USAID's 2003 pedagogical evaluation of programs at the CI and CP levels (1st and 2nd grades), private schools produce better results because they are obliged to obtain results to ensure their survival.

Despite the better results of the private sector in education, in general these schools are reserved for the small proportion of the population that have the means to pay for education, possibly adding to the perpetuation of social inequalities. Moreover, there is a marked qualitative deficit in terms of personnel in most private schools compared with public schools. In private schools where the level of teacher qualification is weak and teaching is not rigorous, students do not perform well. Moreover, some private schools function clandestinely and the teaching quality in such schools is very low.

According to MEPS employees in the field, the NPE has contributed to regulating the administrative situation in a number of private schools. To take part in organized training sessions and to receive textbooks, schools must appear on an official list, which obliges them to undertake the necessary steps to become registered, thus improving the transparency of system management and data reliability. However, we also found an impact on NPE results because teachers in some private schools have not been trained and the provision of materials to private schools is not assured. To obtain teaching materials, private schools are obliged to negotiate with their colleagues in the public sector. This is sometimes the cause of theft and illicit sales of materials, often at exorbitant prices for those parents that want their children to follow the new program.

Based on school site visits and interviews, we found that the the most basic difference between the public and private is in the rigor with which school management is undertaken. This is due in part to the fact that in public schools, principals are also responsible for teaching 6th grade (CM2), for training teachers, and for administrative tasks. Principals often have little appreciation for the fact that they are responsible for the results of their teachers, because they are often preoccupied with their own classes. On the other hand, private school principals have an obligation for results since parents are paying dearly to give their children a quality education. The permanent monitoring and control exercised by the principal obliges the teachers to work regularly.

⁶ When the present evaluation site visits began, private schools were already closed. However, we were able to observe and interview CM2 (6th grade) students who were studying for the CEP examination during the mornings. Although classroom observations were not possible, we were also able to conduct interviews with private school directors and teachers.

II.7 Assessment of teacher training

II.7.1 Pre-service training

Pre-service training is defined as the training given to new recruits before they begin their service. Pre-service training is generally offered through teacher training centers (*écoles normales-ENI*), but the term also applies to the intensive training, which is generally for four weeks⁷ for contract teachers and community teachers that are recruited by school districts.

There has been no systematic pre-service training in Benin for a number of years. The freeze on recruitment in the public sector during the first program of structural adjustment led to a series of closures of teacher training centers between 1987 and 1996, and delivered a fatal blow to the quality of pre-service teacher training. As a consequence, the professors, who were trained at great cost to instruct teachers in teacher training centers, have been dispersed. Therefore, the current system suffers from a lack of professional teacher trainers. The teacher training centers of Parakou (until 2001) and of Natitingou (until 2005) functioned in a state of quasi-hibernation, producing only a limited number of graduates.

The new school year 2005 – 2006 opens the possibility for pre-service training that will be revived by the opening of three teacher training centers in Bohicon, Djougou and Porto Novo. In the medium term, there will be six centers (one per two *departements*⁸), which will train 1,800 teachers annually. Despite the planned reopening of teacher training centers, and the consequent systematic pre-service training that is expected to result, the recruitment of contract and community teachers will continue for some years in order to satisfy the current demand.

USAID can contribute to improving education in Benin through its support for the reopening of the ENIs. To the extent that the Government of Benin and other financial partners have underwritten school construction, USAID can consider providing some equipment, but should focus primarily on supporting the preparedness of ENIs in terms of intellectual content (e.g., program conception, recruitment and training of professors, and length of training programs).

II.7.2 In-service training

In-service training is less formal than pre-service and occurs during school-level (*Unité Pédagogique*—UP) sessions, group trainings, teacher conferences, and by inspectors during their classroom/school visits. At the same time, in-service training is perhaps more important because it is the medium by which all of the members of teacher networks (*Réseau d'Animation Pédagogique*—RAP) can acquire the necessary practical abilities to accomplish their daily teaching tasks.

⁷ Duration of training can vary based on available funding.

⁸ Each MEPS regional directorate covers two *departements*.

Site visits and UP sessions held in IFESH zones (2001-2005)

| DEPARTMENTS | CLASS VISITS | SCHOOL VISITS | TOTAL VISITS | UP SESSIONS HELD |
|----------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|------------------|
| ATACORA/DONGA | 2649 | 294 | 2943 | 123 |
| ATLAN/LITTORAL | 2068 | 125 | 2193 | 96 |
| BORGOU/ALIBORI | 5166 | 439 | 5605 | 244 |
| MONO/COUFFO | 2251 | 206 | 2457 | 633 |
| OUEME/PLATEAU | 1252 | 72 | 1324 | 68 |
| ZOU/COLLINES | 4400 | 303 | 4703 | 186 |
| TOTAL | 17786 | 1439 | 19225 | 1350 |

In-service training generally occurs during specific seasons throughout the country, with the exception of the IFESH school district partners, where training is rigorously planned and monitored. In contrast to non-IFESH intervention zones where school-level sessions and school and classroom visits by inspectorate staff were relatively rare, IFESH has produced striking results during the second phase (2001-2005) of its in-service training project. Although we did not collect directly comparable data for non-IFESH zones, the large number of class and school visits by inspectors and their staff, as well as the number of teacher networks that held sessions in IFESH zones, goes a long way toward explaining what we observed to be better functioning schools in the IFESH zones compared with non-IFESH zones.

The most important actor within the in-service training system is the primary school principal. Our findings from the site visits confirm that teacher quality improves greatly if the principal is dynamic and actively conducts in-service training. For this reason, even teachers that are recruited with a relatively low initial level of education have become excellent professionals because of the monitoring and training they receive from their principals. Because of the pivotal role that principals play in the education system, it is incumbent on system managers to pose crucial questions concerning the nomination of schools principals. Attention should be paid to how this process should be undertaken so as to maximize the effectiveness of in-service training.

USAID intervention could therefore benefit the system by reinforcing the teaching corps through targeted and regular training and retraining sessions.

II.7.3 Institutionalization of training activities

Pre-service and in-service training are currently evolving within a relatively informal environment. It has been difficult to establish national norms for either pre-service or in-service training. The length of training, minimum entry qualifications, the training programs, and the conditions of recruitment are not well understood even at the highest levels of the education system hierarchy.

Pre-service and in-service training would be enriched with the implementation of and respect for a structural framework. Such a framework would establish the method of operation of teacher training centers and would organize in-service training around schools with a structure for exchanges with the UP and with the trainings groups organized by school inspectors. Such a model already exists and needs to be further revitalized.

The site visits established that past trainings had a generally weak impact for two principal reasons: the lack of rigor in the organization and administration of the training and the lack of monitoring after training. The multiplicity of central directorates in charge of training and monitoring, coupled with the lack of a clear mandate for each directorate, has made it difficult to establish responsibilities for the weaknesses within the training system.⁹

To ensure tangible results and continuity, access to the position of school principal, which we have identified as the central pillar in the in-service training system, must be regulated by strict criteria.

Also, it is important to separate training from monitoring and evaluation functions. USAID technical support should emphasize the creation of a formal and transparent structure for training and a different structure for the monitoring of training.

II.8 Student assessment

Our finding during the site visits was that most teachers have only the most basic understanding of the use of formative and summative student assessment within the context of an education that is supposed to be based on the acquisition of competencies. Since the beginning of the reform and the conception of the new program, student assessment has continued to be the weak link within the curriculum.

II.8.1 Formative assessment

Formative assessment is nearly non-existent at the classroom level. The reason for this is the lack of competency at the local level for training teachers in assessment. As a consequence, although teachers and trainers are conscious of the fact that formative assessment should be conducted as an integral part of the process of the acquisition of competencies, they do not practice it. Instruments of formative assessment were not in place until June 2005, when the EQUIPE project developed them.

To better practice formative assessment, teachers will need to be trained. Earlier experiences have shown the weakness of the “cascade” training system and the importance of formative assessment within a system of competency-based education. For this reason, it is important that designers of student assessment tools conduct training down to the district level, specifically targeting principals. USAID support in this area would reinforce the capacity of the entire educational system and could be one of the activities that ultimately determines the success of the NPE.

II.8.2 Summative assessment

Summative assessment, as it is currently employed, is often used to test student knowledge of facts, rather than to evaluate and provide feedback for student learning. Tests should be conceived, administered, and corrected to test knowledge or skills that learners are supposed to have acquired. Without analysis to explain the test results, there can be no assessment. This dimension of the problem remains completely neglected within schools.

5th and 6th grade teachers have received training in test conception, administration, and correction. These training sessions, however, were conducted without a real understanding of the subject. It has only been since June 2005 that instruments to measure student acquisition

⁹ Currently, the piloting of training is shared between four directorates: CFPEEN, CGNPE, DEP and INFRE.

of competencies were finalized as a part of a Project EQUIPE initiative and with the technical assistance of an international authority in competency-based learning. A sample for 6th grade (CM2) was completed and distributed by the Assessment Action Plan pilot to school districts for dissemination in schools.

Learner assessment has been the weak point of the NPE but is currently being resolved. At the conceptual level, necessary competences have already been achieved. It is strongly advisable at this stage to convert the existing materials into training modules and assessment instruments that could be used by teachers in the field. Involvement of parents in the assessment process would also strengthen the impact of assessment. USAID support in this area would be very useful.

II.9 Improved management of the education system in the context of decentralization

Certain deficiencies in the implementation of decentralization persist to the point of meriting special attention.

At the DDEPS and school inspector levels, there is a lack of administrative competence among personnel. This situation adversely affects education sector management at decentralized levels. Moreover, newly adopted procedures have placed additional burdens on school inspectors, few of whom are qualified in the area of financial management. Program budgets, including amortization schedules for vehicles and computers, will become the responsibility of school inspectors.

There are good reasons for the decentralization of school administration. Some schools lack teachers, have dilapidated buildings and furniture, and fail to provide adequate working conditions for teachers and students. Giving schools the capacity to manage their own budgets would allow them to remedy these problems quicker in order to attain the fundamental quality schools (EQF) objectives.

In terms of strategic management, there is no current ministerial procedure that obliges planning at either the national or local levels; as a result, it is difficult to monitor or assess the effectiveness of activities to the extent that the evaluation reference is comprised of strategic planning and programs.

III. Improved Stakeholder Environment: the Impact of the Program on Final Beneficiaries

USAID/Benin's interventions in Benin's educational system have not had maximal impact on final beneficiaries. As noted above, many efforts have been made in terms of access, but the questions of equity and quality remain. Although certain aspects of the New Study Program (NPE) have been relatively successful, other more general reforms still remain to be implemented. It is often repeated that successful implementation of the NPE will, as its end product, promote the development of autonomous and innovated citizens, but many believe that the NPE is not as rigorous as previous programs. Moreover, because Beninese adults are unaccustomed to children's questioning, it is difficult to accept this tendency and to admit that they cannot respond to children's questions.

Classroom observations, in addition to discussions with parents, teachers and directors, suggest that there are several problems with the implementation of the NPE. Although system-wide implementation is proceeding at an acceptable pace despite some local variations, the adaptation process among key system stakeholders is slow and will require more time and investment. This topic is discussed in greater detail in a later section on USAID/Benin's achievements, impacts and constraints vis à vis each group of stakeholders, both at the national and local levels. Given that girls' education is discussed in detail elsewhere in this report, impacts on students are discussed here in a more general fashion.

III.1 National Level

III.1.1 MEPS

A planning and organizational framework for the reform of primary education has been defined. Strategic objectives for the sector are accompanied by 15 action plans grouped into three programs: pedagogy, planning, and institutional reform. Together, these programs constitute the intervention framework for technical and financial partners.

However, the action plans for pedagogical reform are the only ones for which implementation has continued through the present period. Despite the obstacles pedagogical reforms have encountered, this project is progressively transforming the landscape of the Beninese school. Teachers now better understand NPE objectives and strategies and are more motivated to execute NPE methods. Inspectors and pedagogical counselors indicated progress in helping teachers plan the sequencing of classes.

Inspectors trained by IFESH are the most effective in the field. The competencies that they have acquired allow them to better manage the system, but the real impacts are likely to be felt over the long term. Teachers are progressively better trained, more competent, and have greater mastery of the teaching materials. Students in turn are more likely to achieve the desired competencies.

Collaboration with the relevant MEPS technical directorates has resulted in the creation of an information system serving as the basis for a statistics yearbook, electronic school statistics data records, a school-level database (*carte scolaire*) based on EQF data, and a management tool called MAPDecision. Fundamental Quality Schools (EQF), a planning tool for school development, represents a systematic achievement, having established the norms for programming, decision-making, and control, but it has not been well utilized.

In terms of institutional reform, with USAID support, MEPS has produced a procedural manual for the management of financial and human resources. MEPS is currently a pilot ministry in development of program budgets because the ministry has trained cadres that have gained substantial experience in this regard. Nevertheless, turnover within the system means there is not always an effective and rational use of these capacities. Many of those charged with monitoring the implementation of the reform are now outside of the educational system. Others have retired but continue to constitute a potential resource for the educational system, by working with NGOs, a variety of associations, or even private schools. For example, other than its current director, IFESH personnel in Benin essentially consist of retired teachers and inspectors. Additionally, the action plan for public participation has helped to revitalize the implementation and the functioning of parents' associations, particularly in the zones covered by World Education, CARE, and World Learning. Associations function better at all levels of the system as a result of these activities.

The ten-year development plan for the education sector was developed in 1996 with support from the CLEF project. Using input from the Minister of National Education, it provided the framework for a partners' roundtable and the involvement of funders in sectoral development activities. The ten-year plan is unfortunately the only reference document for the development of the education sector produced during the last decade. MEPS has not always managed the implementation of action plans, but these plans have been at least partly institutionalized, thus affecting how the educational system functions and effecting some changes among stakeholders.

III.1.2 Unions

In addition to the national government, it is important to consider other actors at the national level. One group of particular importance is the various teachers' unions. Although USAID/Benin's educational interventions did not have direct impacts on these stakeholders, understanding their role within Benin's educational reform process is critical. This stems from the fact that union activities have significant implications for the impacts of USAID/Benin's interventions.

The union movement has witnessed a remarkable flourishing in a variety of sectors within Benin, favoring freedom of expression and association. Currently, there are some 30 centralized or federated unions operating in the education sector. However, the abundance of union participation, itself a sign of the vitality and vigilance of the teaching corps, has not had a positive impact on school results. .

Since 1999, the Beninese educational system has been shaken by numerous strikes that have greatly shortened the duration of work time during the school year. This reduction of work time has had a direct impact on students' academic achievement as well as on the ability of reforms to take root. However, a good number of situations leading to strikes might have been avoided by a more communicative and participative governmental policy.

The principal union complaint as expressed by their representatives is that the government uses authoritarian methods to enforce its will. As an example, although unions appreciate the New Study Program, they are unsatisfied with its implementation. Unions have highlighted weaknesses in the institutional capacity of the educational system in terms of its organizational and administrative structure.

Unions are important partners. Their participation, through the mobilization of their members, could have a large impact in terms of USAID support to the Beninese educational system. Until now, their role has been primarily oppositional. The extended, intermittent strikes that they have called over the last six years (with the exception of academic year 2003-2004) have mitigated the expected effects of USAID support. Discussions with union representatives have revealed confusion over the roles of the Beninese government and of USAID, meaning resentment against the government has been misdirected at USAID.

Union representatives deplore the fact that their struggles negatively impact the educational system and by extension the entire country, but they have been incapable of finding alternative means for producing the results they desire. They believe that their sole bargaining partner, the government, leaves them no space for any other tactics to achieve their goals.

The lack of regulation governing union activities favors actions that negatively impact schools. The system would clearly benefit from a better definition of terms indicating the rights and duties of each party. The intervention of Parents Associations, opinion leaders, faith-based organizations, and local collectives would also facilitate the union-employer debate.

It would further benefit the educational system for union members to be trained to understand their responsibilities better and to play a more revitalizing and productive role within the educational system. Union members are conscious of the need for training and have advocated for training in areas such as: professional teacher ethics, civics, the mastery of negotiation techniques, and the identification of tactics that are less damaging to the educational system.

III.2 Local Level

While USAID/Benin's impacts at the national level are significant, it has had an even greater impact at the local level. Stakeholders at the local level include local governments and communities, inspectors, directors, teachers, and final beneficiaries such as parents and students. Each of these groups of actors is discussed below in terms of the achievements, impacts and constraints of USAID/Benin's education interventions.

III.2.1 Local Government

The integration of local government (*communes*) into the national education system is a complex question. The vision of a centralized school system clashes with one of the school as a responsibility of local government, and the development of local schools is tightly intertwined with local sociocultural and economic realities. The level of decentralization in Benin is also an important determining factor on the participation of communes in education. For example, although laws require communes to construct and maintain school infrastructure at the local level, the central government does not always give the local governments the financial means to conduct these activities. To the contrary, local governments often complain of the reticence of the central government to discharge its obligations to them. An example of this is the creation of the Directorate of Infrastructure, Equipment and Maintenance (DIEM) within MEPS in 2004, whose allocations come in larger part from the communes than from MEPS.

The mayors that we spoke with during our site visits manifested great interest in the question of education. Education often figures prominently in their development plans; however, their objectives for education and the terms in which they present their projects often revealed a lack of depth and practicality in their understanding of the education system.

III.2.2 Local Communities

USAID/Benin intervenes directly in many local communities through development partners. NGO activities, largely focused on target areas, include participatory development planning, awareness raising on various health and educational issues, and specifically the promotion of greater community involvement in schools. The result of these activities is that more communities now understand the importance of education to their own development.

III.2.3 Integrating HIV/AIDS into education activities

With national HIV prevalence rates already over 4%, there is strong potential for the rapid expansion of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Benin. To address this, USAID/Benin will continue

to work with the West African Mobile Task Team (MTT/West) for HIV/AIDS in Education, providing assistance to the Ministry in the design and implementation of an operational HIV/AIDS and Education sector policy, strategic plan, and set of programs. During our site visits, we found that using textbooks and teacher trainings to raise awareness was effective. All of the teachers we spoke with indicated that they had been trained on HIV/AIDS. USAID-funded projects such as CLEF, EQUIPE, HEPS, and IFESH projects have been instrumental in the production of these results.

Moreover, several USAID/Benin implementing partners produce radio programs in local languages on issues such as girls' education and HIV/AIDS. Roadside billboards on these topics and on related issues are evident across the country. Some local communities are, therefore, regularly receiving information on HIV/AIDS and other important issues. This is especially critical where girls' education is concerned because it facilitates girls' access to school. These communication interventions are very important in terms of raising awareness within Beninese communities.

III.2.4 Involvement of civil society

Local associations, particularly parents' associations, are better equipped and linked with regional and national associations. Moreover, in certain communities, various groups are increasingly concerned with education issues. These groups are composed of influential community members, local government officials, teachers, and members of local parents' associations.

Some communities are clearly active with respect to educational issues, but many are not. This reflects the most serious limitation to community involvement, which is communication. Many localities do not fully understand the NPE specifically, or education reform generally, and therefore work against its successful implementation. This results from the specific geographic focus of USAID/Benin's target areas. In the small number of localities where implementation partners are active, few communication problems exist, but the majority of communities have yet to benefit from interventions.

III.2.5 School System: Inspectors, Directors, and Teachers

Through USAID/Benin's work with development partners such as the Mitchell Group, Creative Associates, IFESH, and CARE, it is possible to identify several important achievements. All teachers, directors and school inspectors we interviewed have received training on the NPE. Further, most primary school teachers have attended two or four week introductory training on the NPE. In addition to basic pedagogy, this includes subject-specific and administrative training. Moreover, many have received training on issues of gender equity and HIV/AIDS. Because of new training, some teachers are actually teaching gender equity and HIV/AIDS in their classes.

CARE, one of USAID/Benin's implementing partners, has introduced another idea, which is results-based measurement of teacher success. This entails training teachers and directors to focus on student success as a measure of their own. To acknowledge their successes, CARE holds ceremonies in schools where it works, at which it gives teachers and students awards recognizing their successes.

These positive effects notwithstanding, some obstacles persist. The level of education required to implement the NPE effectively is quite high, so the approach is extremely difficult for some teachers who lack any advanced education. For example, some teachers do

not understand the importance of both formative and summative assessment and therefore only concentrate on the former. Several teachers expressed frustration with the new program, saying it made their jobs more difficult. Even though lecture time had been reduced, the fact that they must do more outside research to prepare their lessons effectively ultimately made their jobs more difficult. Some teachers also have specific trouble facilitating the independent research required of students in the NPE.

Directors generally have too many responsibilities as they have multiple roles within their schools including teacher, administrator, and trainer. The result is that some responsibilities are not well addressed. For example, monitoring and supervision are weak both at the level of the school (directors over teachers) and within many school systems generally. The result is that transparency within the system is limited.

Finally, teachers and directors in Benin are still poorly paid relative to the cost of living; they work with few resources and experience poor working conditions. For example, in Cotonou the cost of the cheapest housing is equivalent to between one third and one half of the average primary school teacher's salary. Some classes we observed consisted of a poorly constructed shelter open to the air covered with a palm leaf roof. These classes are unusable during the rainy season. Often, the result is very low motivation.

III.2.6 Parents

Parent Associations. Through its development partners, particularly World Education, USAID/Benin has also achieved significant results with respect to parents' involvement in schools. Although Parent Associations (*Associations de Parents d'Elèves* – APE) have traditionally been involved in school management in Benin, USAID/Benin's interventions have made APEs much more dynamic. At a minimum, APEs must approve the annual budget developed by the school director (often in concert with the APE). In some cases, parents raise money for various school needs, including construction costs of new classrooms to which they often contribute at least a portion of the costs in money, materials and/or labor. For example, one APE raised funds for the installation of electricity in their children's school so that students could stay later to study. Beyond these basic activities, in the past, they often hired teachers (albeit not always qualified ones) when there were not enough to cover the demand for classes. The school inspector now largely coordinates this function, but in some places, parents still participate actively.

Mothers' Associations. One clear benefit of USAID/Benin's programs for women is the development of mothers' associations. These associations provide a space for mothers to come together for mutual support and effective participation in their children's education. Some groups participating in radio programs that raise community awareness about the importance of education for everyone also facilitate women's discussions on their ideas and concerns about their children's education. After reaching some consensus they can take these to the APE, which is usually male-dominated, where they have a greater voice as a collective than any woman would have individually. Work in these associations facilitates collaboration in other areas of women's lives. For example, some groups take turns doing childcare for those too young for school. This enables women to maintain their economic activities without burdening their daughters. Some also engage in collective income generating activities.

Literacy. Parents are also direct beneficiaries of the NPE. Specifically, some APEs and mother's groups have chosen literacy training as an activity for themselves. Although at one school the parents expressed frustration at the difficulty of hiring a teacher, nonetheless the

fact that parents seek out this assistance reflects the positive impacts of the mission's interventions in Benin. In part, this reflects the fact that parents in communities where USAID/Benin has been active are much more aware of the importance of education. As one APE member expressed on behalf of the group, parents want their children to have better opportunities than they do. At a minimum, parents want their children to be able to read and write so they cannot be cheated in selling their goods. The result is that some APEs and mother's associations are often actively involved in raising awareness among other parents about the importance of school for both boys and girls.

Literacy training for parents is extremely important in the Beninese context, where illiteracy among adults is 70%. This inhibits parents' ability to identify and fight for a quality education for their children. Moreover, illiteracy prevents parents from being able to help their children with schoolwork. In some instances, lack of literacy and numeracy training also limits the extent to which they can actually be involved in school management. As in many other parts of the world, parents are busy working, which can further constrain their active participation in schools. Urban areas are especially problematic in this regard because social cohesion is not as easily established and maintained as it is in small villages. It is easy for parents to think someone else will take care of the school so they do not have to.

III.2.7 Students

Children are the ultimate beneficiaries of USAID's educational programs. Today, with a few exceptions, all primary school students in Benin have access to textbooks and workbooks. In addition, they are engaged in more active learning than was the case prior to NPE implementation. Beyond these two achievements, USAID's funded programs have facilitated learning through the provision of canteens at which students both have a place to study during the afternoon break and are ensured of at least one meal a day. These canteens are especially important in extremely rural areas where children walk great distances to attend school.

Many school directors and teachers that we encountered in site visits recognized that the program does not change the basic content of primary school texts. Rather, they noted that it offers a new approach to helping students acquire the information therein. According to some teachers, the impact of this new approach is that students are becoming better prepared for life. The education they are receiving, especially their active engagement in the learning process, not only leads them to become more aware of what they already know but also will help prepare them to take greater personal and professional responsibility for themselves later in life. For example, one teacher noted that rather than waiting around to find work in the public service, students would increasingly be better prepared to create their own income generating opportunities. This is especially important in an economy impacted by World Bank and International Monetary Fund Structural Adjustment programs that seek to reduce public sector employment in favor of private sector development. The NPE also fosters a greater sense of community and mutual responsibility among students. This is especially apparent in group work, where stronger students help weaker ones, and in after-school study, which also, based on school recommendations, often takes place in groups.

Tangible results of USAID/Benin's work in education include increased enrollment rates for both boys and girls, declining dropout rates, and a closing of the gap in promotion rates between boys and girls. Further, teachers in some localities did not participate during general strikes. This enabled students to continue their schooling. Even where most teachers

participated in the strike, often sixth grade classes continued at least two or three days a week so that students would be prepared for the end of year CEP exam.

Despite these positive impacts, obstacles to continuous progress exist. For example, various teachers, directors, and parents commented that they were unsure about the extent to which students were really learning some material, specifically reading and writing in French. Classroom observation supports this concern in that at least a few students in virtually all public school classes had difficulty pronouncing French words correctly when reading from class texts. While teachers' attributed this to problems in the structure of the new program, it is also possible that prolonged strikes and crowded classrooms negatively affected students' ability to learn effectively. In some schools we visited, class size ranged from 50 to 100 students.

As noted earlier, in some parts of Benin, especially northern and rural communities, daughters are married off at an early age. This not only reflects cultural considerations, but also the high opportunity costs associated with education for families. Girls are especially important at home because they help with housework, childcare, and economic activities. In rural areas, however, boys are also affected in that their labor is important to farm work.

IV. Assessment of Impact and Relevance of USAID/Benin Education Program

IV.1 Review of strategic objectives, expected results, and BET indicators

IV.1.1 Strategic Objective: More children receive a quality basic education on an equitable basis.

The figures show that more children of both genders do have many opportunities to receive an education in Benin. In the years from 1998 – 2004, gross enrollment rate grew steadily, exceeding the mission's planned outcomes. During these years, gross enrollment increased from 76% to 96%, with girls' enrollment increasing from 60% to 84%. For FY 2006, and to meet the indicator requirements as a *transitional development country*, the mission should also use net enrollment as an indicator. In addition to assisting the mission in meeting this requirement, measurement of net enrollment will allow BET staff to better track the number of students of the appropriate age range that are enrolled.

Total student promotion. Student promotion rates also increased more rapidly than the mission had projected. Total promotion rates increased from 64% in 1998 reaching a peak in 2000 of 73%, subsequently declining to 63% in 2003 in large part because of the effects of strikes.

Equity in grade promotion. Promotion rates were roughly equivalent for boys and girls between 1998 and 2003, with a progressively narrowing gap between the two. The boys' promotion rate is somewhat higher than that of girls.

Student achievement. In addition to promotion, the mission should also begin to measure achievement rates in 2006. This will provide an important complement to promotion rates in assessing the degree to which students are meeting educational standards. Measuring student achievement rates additionally complies with the mission's proposal to conduct qualitative research on student achievement, which we recommend as well.

Textbooks. From 2000 to the present¹⁰, the mission undertook the costs of printing textbooks and workbooks for the NPE. The mission has provided, on average, two textbooks for each student, although with some important variations among schools that we have discussed in this evaluation. Because the NPE had completed a full implementation cycle by 2005, this indicator will be dropped in 2006.

Dropout rates. For 2006, the mission also plans to include dropout rates as an indicator. Although we agree with the inclusion of dropout rates as an important indicator, we also caution that there are many difficult methodological issues that make dropouts difficult to accurately measure, even in countries with advanced data collection systems.

IV.1.2 Intermediate Result 1: Improved Pedagogical System

Curriculum and teacher manuals. The most important impact of USAID assistance has certainly been at the level of the pedagogical system. The quality of classroom instruction has metamorphosed as a result of the activities of the CLEF and EQUIPE projects. Teaching materials, which numbered only a few pages before the intervention, now number in the hundreds of pages and are composed of assorted practical guides for teachers and of student textbooks and workbooks in math and French. Programs have been revised for some of these materials, but revisions remain to be made for grades 1-4.

Revitalization of Teaching Corps. In-service teacher training will continue to be a major element in improving education. Teacher training networks (*Réseau d'Animation Pédagogique*—RAP) have been a vital element in promoting professional quality and exam preparation for teachers, but only in those school districts that have partnered with the USAID-funded IFESH project. This USAID assistance reaches through all levels of the ministry.¹¹ Elsewhere, however, major constraints, including the lack of rigor in monitoring, limit the impact on teaching quality.

Implementation of the New Study Program (NPE). The indicator “evidence that teachers use the new curriculum and corresponding textbooks according to prescribed methodology” conflates two important issues. Although there is strong evidence that teachers use NPE materials, we are concerned about the degree to which some teachers understand the concepts and instructional methods of the NPE. For this reason, we question the validity of a dichotomous “yes” or “no” result for measuring teacher understanding of NPE teaching methods.

Assessment of student comprehension. In a similar vein, we did not find substantial evidence that teachers make full use of the prescribed student learning assessment tools. Although surveys reported in the PMP indicate that 83% of surveyed trained teachers stated that they used student assessment, we have observed that student assessment, particularly formative assessment, has yet to become an integral part of teaching in Benin primary schools. Nearly all teachers, directors, and pedagogical counselors whom we interviewed during site visits

¹⁰ Please refer to Appendices 12, 13, and 14 for more detail about textbook production in Benin.

¹¹ In all of the 36 school districts participating in PETTP 2, there is an IFESH pedagogical assistant whose participation is instrumental in the effective revitalization of teaching. Since 2004 and by ministry order, these pedagogical assistants have acted as substitutes for MEPS's pedagogical counselors. This new position gives pedagogical assistants great latitude to intervene in the co-management of classroom-based activities. IFESH also intervenes in the training of members of the control corps of the Centre de Formation des Personnels d'Encadrement de l'Éducation Nationale (CFPEEN).

showed only a vague appreciation of formative evaluation within the context of a competency-based approach.

Pedagogical monitoring: inspection, visits and reporting. The indicator “percentage of instructional classroom visits conducted by pedagogical counselors on a yearly basis” is appropriate, and unfortunately the percentage of at least one visit per year to 75% of schools by inspectors has not been met. MEPS’s Pedagogical Inspectorate Directorate (DIP) is the division that is responsible for site monitoring, but its activities have remained mitigated. Because of the institutional weaknesses that we have described elsewhere, it remains very difficult to collect statistical data, information on the execution of programs, teacher revitalization, and the monitoring of educational personnel at the school district level. Because of a lack of reinforcement through monitoring, the impact of teacher training efforts has been diminished.

IV.1.3 Intermediate Result 2: Increased Girls’ enrollment in target areas

We have discussed two indicators, enrollment and promotion rates, in an earlier section. Levels of girls’ participation in schooling is continuing to increase, especially in those areas in which multiple factors (professional, economic, and especially cultural) converge, and in which the populations become aware of the importance of education. The activities of NGO partners in target areas have not only favored the inscription and retention of girls in school, but have also improved the status of their mothers through their work with diverse organizations (e.g., mothers’ associations, village groupings, mutual aid societies, and cooperatives.)

IV.1.4 Intermediate Result 3: Improved environment for stakeholders

The social environment is still one of hostility toward schools in certain regions, but more and more people, including fierce opponents of schooling, have become convinced of the value of education because of the work of USAID partners such as the National Network for Girls’ Education, World Learning, World Education, Research Triangle International (RTI), and CARE International.

Parents. At the local level, certain parents’ associations (and mothers’ associations for women in certain regions) have become very active and decisive partners in the success of schools. At the communal level, coordination of parent associations (*Coordinations des APE-CAPE*) has resulted in a similar role. Those schools in which parents’ associations work in concert with teachers and others in the educational system consistently demonstrate the best results and sustainability in terms of community participation and school management.

Communes. USAID through its partner in decentralization, the Research Triangle Institute (RTI) works with communes, the level of government that should be the most important local actor in the development of the education system. Thirteen communes in the Borgou-Alibori and Mono-Couffo regions are involved in projects that are jointly sponsored by USAID’s Education, Governance, and Health teams. To this day, however, communes have not been brought in as full partners in the educational system, and the problem of decentralization and strengthening the role of communes in the education system warrants particular attention.

Teachers. In the context of educational reform and especially with the new educational program, teachers have benefited from a large portion of USAID’s education assistance. Each year, pre-service and in-service training in the NPE has targeted teachers by the courses and grade levels they teach. In-service training has been principally organized and conducted by

USAID partner organizations. The teaching corps constitutes the key to the success of reforms, but many organizational problems still mitigate the formation of an effective teaching corps.

IV.1.5 Intermediate Result 4: Improved management of the education system

Institutional weakness in the management of the educational system remains one of the most sensitive areas for USAID-Government of Benin collaboration. Institutional weakness is expressed in various domains, including pedagogy, statistics, the execution of budgets, and dealings with unions. USAID assistance has been primarily in the first two domains: pedagogy and educational statistics.

Pedagogy. The CLEF and EQUIPE projects have greatly contributed to sustaining educational reform and the new program of studies.

Statistics. These same projects have supported data collection initiatives and the design of procedural manuals for this data collection, as well as the design and implementation of MapDecision, an educational management tool.

IV.2 Assessment of results relative to investment

Despite the clear positive impact that most USAID-funded projects have demonstrated, the mission's education budget has declined during the period from FY 2003-2005 from \$7.4 million in 2003, to \$7.2 million and \$6 million in 2004 and 2005 respectively.

At the present time, and primarily due to the support of USAID, nearly all schools have adequate supplies of textbooks (for all grades) and workbooks (for CI and CP) in math and French. In-service training at the school district level, particularly when it focuses on specific topics based on local needs assessment has proven very effective. Furthermore, the mission is currently proactive in its discussions with MEPS to define a more effective approach to teacher training.

With USAID support, Benin has shown marked improvement in girls' education. It has also seen some improvement in improving the environment for stakeholders and has adopted an approach that is likely to further improve implementation of a decentralized educational system, through efforts such as the promotion of effective parent associations and parental involvement at the school level.

USAID has taken a primary leadership role in aiding the Government of Benin to reform its educational system. The mission is working with the GOB to help increase transparency and efficiency through the promotion of an annual performance report and its lobbying efforts to ensure that the government's allocated education budget is executed.

IV.3 Assessment of sustainability

All key respondents, as well as many respondents during our site visits indicated that the leadership that USAID has provided in the education sector has been the most important factor in rebuilding the system. Indeed, most respondents believe that the expansion and coverage of the education system that has occurred would not have happened without American assistance.

When USAID began its interventions in the early 1990's, the Beninese educational system was emerging from a period of near total collapse. Since that time, the system has been rehabilitated and expanded to such an extent that a large majority of primary school aged children now have access to an education and all students now have books in the classrooms. Many of the activities that USAID has undertaken will continue to have an impact, but educational reform, and reform that goes beyond expansion of access to a system that delivers a quality education to youth, is a long-term process, often requiring decades of investment.

With some exceptions, notably in a largely ineffective approach to large-group teacher training adopted over the last six years, we have found that USAID investment has had a profound impact on primary education in Benin. We have found that IFESH has done a very effective job with its "proximity training" approach and its work with inspectors to ensure greater monitoring and supervision. During the last several years, the mission has also worked with several other partners that have emphasized approaches that have dramatically increased enrollment, including substantial gains in girls' access and promotion rates. Moreover, with USAID support, these NGOs have also promoted greater parental involvement in targeted areas, as parents, through associations and federations, begin to realize that education, particularly mass education, as opposed to education for only a minority of children, is the responsibility of the entire community.

Other examples of sustainable programs are as follows:

- *National capacity has been developed in curriculum design and textbook writing.*
- *Textbook production.* Private businesses invested in machinery and training so that they could meet the requirements of RFPs and now respond to regional RFPs in textbook production; there is also reinforced desktop publishing capacity at INFRE.
- *The transfer of copyrights from USAID.* Because of this transfer, textbooks can be printed locally and sold at a low price
- *Local NGO capacity building.* Even if funding stops, these local NGOs have begun action research strategies in community development and education.
- *Reinforcement of and capacity building for a sustainable data collection service within the Ministry.*
- *Access to primary education.* A continuing increase in access to primary schooling, which will remain particularly if improvements in quality follow.

In Benin, as in many other countries that have rapidly expanded access to primary education, increased enrollment has placed enormous strains on the central government and localities. This pressure has resulted from the creation of new classrooms, overcrowded school conditions, lack of teachers, and the various institutional weaknesses in the educational system that we have discussed throughout this report. Moreover, there remain continuing dysfunctions in Benin's education system, which have been exacerbated by the persistent strike activity among teachers that has disrupted public education over the last five years. Although strikes disrupted fewer months of schooling activity in the 2004-05 year, the government of Benin has not yet reached a solution that is likely to satisfy teachers' unions. For these reasons, we have also suggested some interventions that include the involvement and training of unions.

We believe that continuing USAID support to education in Benin is essential to building a stronger and more sustainable decentralized education system. In light of the many positive results that the mission has shown, we would suggest that funding should be at levels *at least matching* average levels of the past funding cycle, to allow the mission to build on its successes. As we have outlined elsewhere in our report, continued funding is appropriate, particularly in those areas of continuing teacher training that have proven effective, as well as assistance in planning for, and eventual support for teacher training centers. Now that access to primary education is nearly complete, we suggest that the overarching emphasis during the next funding cycle be placed on an improvement in quality and equity in education. In this way, the betterment of the system in quality will match the important strides the country has made in the domain of educational access.

The mission should also continue to build on its successes in gender equity, decentralization and community participation, and in assisting in building capacity, particularly at local levels for the management of the educational system. We encourage the mission to continue in its efforts to work with the Government of Benin and with local authorities to ameliorate management of the educational system and to increase transparency within the sector via improved reporting and execution of budget allocations by the Government.

V. Analysis of Bridging Activities Proposed by USAID/Benin

V.1 Reinforcement of pedagogical capacities

Support for Teacher Training Centers (Normal Schools)

As of the 2003-2004 school year, there was an estimated deficit of 7,105 qualified teachers in the public primary system; the percentage of teachers has seen a net regression for several years, decreasing for example, from 84% in 1996 to 72% in 2003.

Moreover, the total deficit of *qualified* teachers (with a minimum educational level of BEPC) in public and private schools at the beginning of the 2002 school year rose to more than 15,500 when non-qualified teachers are counted.

This situation has led to poor results as manifested by still weak grade promotion rates (62.9% in 2003) and very high rates of grade repetition and dropout (23.6% and 13.5%) respectively during the same period.

Since the implementation of reform of primary education study programs, the situation has become more worrisome. Weak teacher qualification levels, the lack of mastery of the new study programs, the lack of teacher training, and the reduction of teacher work time are responsible for the observed regression of student performance.

The findings made during the course of this evaluation show that the most troublesome problems are related to teacher competence in the classroom, which negatively affects the quality of teaching in the schools.

The current educational system is therefore characterized by:

- A quantitative lack of teachers;

- A lack of qualifications among two-thirds of those teachers that are currently working;
- The absence of pre-service teacher training centers.

Faced with such a situation, all forms of support that are designed to develop and reinforce the teacher competencies would benefit the education system.

All respondents at central and local levels indicated the importance of pre-service teacher training as a prerequisite for any profound change in system quality. Currently, MEPS has a plan for the creation of six normal schools between 2005 and 2010. Three of these are scheduled to open in 2005 in temporary quarters. Two of these (in Porto-Novo and Abomey) have received promises of funding, from the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) and Danish Assistance (DANIDA), respectively. The third school, planned for Djougou, has not yet received offers of financing, but has received an allocation of 15 hectares from the local government.

Aid to future teacher training centers for pre-service training could take a variety of forms, but USAID is currently considering pedagogical support, (including development of teacher training capacities, curriculum development, and assessment). MEPS has established a working group (*cellule*) charged with the coordination of activities related to the reopening of the Normal Schools but the group's activities are currently four months behind schedule. In order to achieve better efficiency and linkage with its other program goals, we recommend that MEPS revise its timetable with respect to these delays, and include greater details on its planned deployment of resources for the activities of teacher training centers.

Moreover, the working group needs to work with a team of program specialists to validate the training contents to ensure that they are well adapted to the current school program. Furthermore, the working group should ensure the development and use of monitoring and evaluation tools to ensure good operational implementation.

The success of teacher training centers will depend on the degree of preparation, the rigor of execution, and the consistency of monitoring and evaluation.

V.2 Reinforcement of the capacity of current teachers

V.2.1 Pre-service training in the New Study Programs (NPE)

USAID had supported teacher training in the NPE since the beginning of the reform process. However, according to the training program's monitoring criteria, the performance rate for four-week NPE training has never exceeded 20%. Training sessions were criticized as too theoretical and having little relation with the actual learning situations that confront teachers in the classroom. A continuation of this approach would represent a waste of resources, but a successful alternative model to these relatively unproductive training sessions has been created by IFESH. This approach was replicated by MEPS in its February 2005 training of 6th grade teachers, and should be further replicated to ensure good results.

Because this alternative training model is better adapted to the practical realities of the teaching environment, it has a much greater potential for positive impacts than the former model. For best effect, similar training models should be implemented at the school level at the beginning of the upcoming school year.

V.2.2 Prerequisites for Training

We strongly recommend that these training sessions be held at least 15 days after teachers receive their new postings so that the teachers who take part in training know where they will be posted and which courses they will teach. The training of new principals should also be held at the same time to better enable them to train their colleagues in the new approaches. IFESH could be called on to provide the necessary expertise to support the design of training models, the administration of the training, and the selection and training of teacher trainers.

V.2.3 In-service training

Under its USAID grant, IFESH has supported the educational system with in-service training of primary school teachers through its Primary Education Teacher Training Project (PETTP). This project has completed two phases involving 21 and 36 school districts, respectively. During implementation, IFESH project zones have been almost exclusively the only regions in which educational norms have been respected: educational activities in those areas have been conducted according to a pre-established program and with a degree of rigor and monitoring that have produced conclusive results.

However, there is an important problem of sustainability that should be addressed. We found that when IFESH leaves its zones, staff in these areas fall into the same apathy that affects the system in general. Even brilliant school district heads from the IFESH zones return to the same disquieting amorphousness once they are stationed in other zones.

It is important to extend IFESH activities to those school districts that have never benefited from the project, thereby maintaining within the system zones that show by example and prove that schools that can be resuscitated if the motivation of civil servants and the professional environment is healthy and dynamic. It is important to insist that MEPS take the necessary steps to ensure that the revitalization provided by IFESH in their intervention zones be allowed to flourish throughout the educational system.

V.3 Curriculum

V.3.1 Revision of curricula and training materials for CI-CM2

1st and 2nd grade programs were developed as objective-based programs, in contrast with programs at the 3rd and later grades, which emphasize a competency based approach. Teachers indicated that their materials sometimes provide insufficient explanations or lack coherence. According to a variety of system actors, there is a need to revise teaching materials and to better adapt them to the levels of teachers and learners.

Our earlier evaluation report of the 1st and 2nd grade programs recommended that:

“The New Study Program curriculum should be simplified and lighten so that they could be better understood by both experienced and beginning teachers.”

The ministry is already implementing this recommendation. However, the documents that are produced should be validated as necessary by an experienced team of curriculum consultants to ensure that they meet the required norms.

If the curricula and teachers’ guides require revision, textbooks and workbooks can continue to be used during a transitional period without modification.

V.4 Linkages between primary and secondary schools

As the Beninese educational reform concludes its phase of generalization at the primary level, it is important to ask what the next stage of the reform's evolution should be. The authorities that we interviewed emphasized the importance of USAID support and suggested that the reform be continued into at least middle school (the first cycle of secondary education). However, our evaluation team was unable to discern any practical organization for such a transition.

It is apparent that the system is ill prepared for such an extension. Secondary school teachers are not trained in the new pedagogical approaches, there are no textbooks to serve as the basis for competency-based learning, and training programs for a variety of subject areas are still under development. Moreover, the process of generalization at the primary level as a whole has only been partially evaluated, and as a result, there is no coherent view of what has been accomplished by educational reforms.

Nevertheless, there are strong reasons for extending reforms to the secondary level. Limiting reforms would have an impact on the entire educational system, particularly on primary education. For this reason, USAID should consider supporting reforms throughout the entire system of basic education through middle school. The reasons militating for such a choice are the following:

- Teachers at the secondary level generally have an academic level that is superior to those in primary schools. This represents a major advantage that will facilitate training in competency-based approaches and the ability to teach students using these methods.
- Students that have completed primary education and will be attending secondary school have been trained within a pedagogical framework that privileges the acquisition of competencies, which is in contrast to the current curricula of secondary schools that is exclusively knowledge based.
- The secondary level is a critical determinant of practices at the primary level. The disjuncture between the primary and secondary levels in terms of approaches may cause reforms at the primary level to falter, and would seriously inhibit the motivation of the teacher corps, which is already unstable, as well as inhibit student motivation.
- If reforms stop at the primary level, there may be unforeseen social and political consequences including a backlash against reforms among parents, opinion leaders, detractors of the New Study Programs, and other school actors that were only peripherally associated with reforms.

V.5 Educational Materials

In pursuing its support of educational reform in Benin, USAID should work with MEPS to find ways to reinforce its organizational capacity. For example, the educational system suffers from chronic delays in the disbursement of public treasury funds for programmed educational activities. USAID could provide the following technical assistance in the creation of a structure that would allow for decentralized financial planning and management for the education sector.

- Post a request for proposals for school textbooks production;

- Assure in the short term a more equal distribution and better management of materials (the reform continues to need material support);
- Progressively create a support fund for materials production to facilitate their acquisition at a low price by parents (this would resolve the problem of equalizing distribution, as well as the management and conservation of these materials at the school level);
- Extend the distribution network throughout the country to better facilitate access to textbooks to all children in an equitable fashion.

V.6 Fundamental Quality Schools

The Action Plan for Fundamental Quality Schools (EQF) is a school planning instrument that determines minimal norms that allow a school to be called a fundamental quality school. These norms provide the educational system benchmarks toward which all schools are expected to strive. A 2001 evaluation revealed that no public school satisfied all EQF norms. To promote accomplishment of EQF norms in these schools, it is important to create “window” schools using a project-based approach and utilizing criteria that are attainable given the national context.

The new 2005 – 2006 school year will witness the reopening of three normal schools in the south, center and north of the country. This geographical disposition is favorable to the implantation of EQF schools. Such schools could play the double role of application schools for the normal schools.

At the same time, it is important to retain the basic principle the EQF Action Plan and its norms, which is that the community should appropriate EQF concepts and become intimately involved in the realization of the project to assure its chances for sustainability. Technical support provided by USAID will be a determining factor in the development of this project at the local level.

V.7 Support for Community Participation and Life Skills

V.7.1 Support for community groups especially PTA and/or Mothers' Associations for girls' education.

The work of World Learning and CARE International through their programs, CAGE and PROBASE, respectively, have already achieved a great deal in sensitizing parents in particular and communities more generally to the importance of girls' education. Yet, more needs to be done in this area. Both the CAGE and PROBASE programs are limited to specific geographic areas within Benin. Given the success rate of these programs, these findings suggest the importance of extending the geographic scope of these NGOs' work. In addition, World Education has developed an excellent program for the development of Mothers' Associations, the promotion of which should also be considered within the rubric of USAID/Benin's bridging activities.

Many directors and teachers indicated that it is really mothers who are most likely to monitor their children's work and be available to the school. The director of one NGO even suggested that mothers' involvement in their children's education has the greatest potential for success of the NPE. Mothers' role in the lives of their children reflects the prevalence of polygamy in Benin. Women are often the parent who has the greatest contact with children, thereby facilitating their role as monitors.

This suggests that USAID/Benin should focus bridging activities especially on women and on the development of Mothers' Associations. These groups should not replace the APEs, but rather work in concert with them. Whereas individual women may have a difficult time being heard within the APE structure, which is male-dominated, as group they can have a greater impact. This pattern of organization is consistent with parallel political structures that were prevalent among many ethnic groups in West Africa during the pre-colonial period.

V.7.2 Teaching life-skills in education activities

All school directors in our sample indicated that they and their teachers received training on teaching about AIDS/STDs. They also all stated that this subject matter was broached in fifth and sixth grades because the materials were included in student manuals. The depth and extent to which this material is addressed is questionable, however. Moreover, a number of teachers and directors indicated that teaching life-skills such as about AIDS/STDs should start earlier using age appropriate materials. Indeed, they would broach this subject themselves starting with much younger students if not for the restrictions placed on them by MEPS. These findings suggest that the identified activities are critical to further development of the NPE.

In addition to education about AIDS and STDs, USAID/Benin should strengthen training on basic hygiene, health, and reproduction. For example, greater awareness of reproduction processes along with continued activities to reduce instances of sexual assault by teachers might facilitate reductions in the level of pregnancy among school-aged girls. Further, USAID/Benin should continue to promote education on children's rights. This triangulated approach could go a long way to promoting girls' enrollment and retention in school.

V.7.3 Parent Education and Tutor Preparation

Although awareness raising should continue on many fronts, one key element is the development of mothers' associations. These groups not only provide opportunities for women's involvement in the children's education, but also serve as a space in which parental education can effectively occur. For example, in some of the Mothers' Associations developed under World Education's program, women have chosen practical literacy training as one of their activities. This will not only facilitate their ability to help their children, but will also serve to improve their own life-skills. In addition, training for both parents and tutors in how to implement the NPE in settings outside of school is also key. As noted above, many parents do not understand their importance in facilitating their children's education. Specific training on this will greatly enhance parents' ability to fulfill their role.

In addition to training tutors, USAID/Benin should promote some locally developed initiatives to enhance children's learning. For example, in some villages, school directors and teachers organize student study groups comprised of both strong and weak students who live near each other. These groups allow students without light to work in homes where it exists. Moreover, it facilitates learning by both strong and weak students. A further option is to hold after school review and/or study sessions in which students again work together for their mutual benefit. These locally generated approaches may be more accessible to all students, including those whose parents cannot pay for a tutor.

V.7.4 Environmental Education

Since its beginning in Benin in 1995 with 8 schools, the Globe project has grown to include 108 public and private schools in the country. The project focuses on training students in

environmental protocols tailored to various levels within the primary and secondary school system. It also provides schools with basic tools that enable students to collect data on a variety of environmental factors in their local area. At the primary level, student activities include regularly measuring temperature, measuring the height of trees, and conducting simple soil and water pH and temperature tests.

After students collect data, it is entered into a central database sponsored by NASA and shared with scientists throughout the world. Through the years, the Globe project has assisted schools with the provision of computers and internet connectivity, with the schools being responsible for the telecommunications charges incurred in the transmission of data.

Currently 57 of the 108 schools have such connectivity, with the majority (n=37) of schools having received systems during the period from 2003-05.

Through the present, the Globe project has been funded through the mission's primary institutional contracting projects, CLEF and its successor EQUIPE. Based on visits to a Globe school included in our sample, a review of an impact report (2000), and discussions with the Globe coordinator, we believe that the program has exhibited a track record of success. In addition, we would recommend:

- Continued and stable funding to allow the program to furnish schools with simple and appropriate measurement devices;
- Continued training in environmental studies;
- Continued provision of teacher guides and videos;
- Continued training to reinforce teacher capacity;
- Coordination with media agencies (radio, TV, and press) for the diffusion of information on the environment, based on the collected data.

VI. Recommendations for Future USAID Activities

Assuming current levels of Funding

The highest priorities for Benin's education system are teacher training, support for decentralization, and communication on the goals of the education system. Below, we discuss these priority areas and our recommendations

VI.1 Teacher training

We propose the following activities and chronogram for teacher training:

VI.1.1 Pre-service training

(1st year—2005-06). Establish a structured framework for organization, functioning, administration, and curriculum of teacher training centers. This framework should take into account the following points:

- Recruitment criteria for student teachers
- Recruitment criteria for instructors
- Recruitment criteria for administrative personnel
- Content of trainings. Define the program for each course including general training, pedagogy, and the new study programs. Training should be related to the NPE; instructors and student teachers should identify insufficiencies and

incoherencies during their study sessions for input into revisions for the simplification of the curriculum, teacher guides and textbooks.

- Program of training
- Development of administrative and pedagogical procedures manual

(2nd year—2006-07). Support the implementation of teacher training centers with the following activities:

- Production and acquisition of pedagogical materials
- Training of trainers

VI.1.2 In-service training

The highest priority is the need to reinforce and ameliorate in-service training and pedagogical monitoring. USAID should assist MEPS with the following activities:

(1st through 3rd years—2005-08). Revitalize teacher networks (*Réseau d'Animation Pédagogique*) by reinforcing the capacities of the inspection directorate (DIP) through close collaboration and technical assistance from IFESH; providing inspectors with adequate means to ensure their functioning in the following:

- Assure good supervision of inspectors
- Quarterly or periodic monitoring and evaluation in all inspectorates
- Teacher training - short and practical proximity training for specific needs such as:
 - Execution and utilization of student knowledge assessment;
 - Laws against abuse of students.

We suggest that USAID support technical assistance for teacher in-service days (*journées de concertation*) during which annual programming would clearly define the roles and responsibilities of each party.

VI.1.3 Pre-service and in-service training on student assessment

(2nd and 3rd years—2006-08). Provide practical training for teachers in the execution and use of results of student assessment:

- Give feedback to students and parents
- Utilize the results to orient lessons
- Reinforce the pedagogical approach

VI.2 Community development and decentralization

(1st through 5th years—2005-10). Within a context of reinforcing local and national capacities in planning, management, monitoring and evaluation, we view decentralization and community development as a high priority. We therefore propose that USAID's Governance (GOV) & Basic Education Teams (BET) harmonize their programs and intervention zones to better support the implementation of education development plans at the communal level. To facilitate collaboration between local authorities and the education system, we propose the following activities:

- Concerted work between international and national NGOs with local elected officials, the MEPS cabinet, inspectors, school principals and teachers, on the theme of collaboration with the Beninese educational system (1st year—2005-06).
- Support for school inspectors in their new tasks as financial managers of the educational system.
- Establishing, in the terms of reference of all NGOs financed by USAID at the local level, the obligation to collaborate with local authorities and the educational system (2nd year—2006-07).

VI.3 System Management: Communications

(1st to 3rd years—2005-08). Various efforts have been made to reinforce the capacity of system management at national levels. However, we believe that the highest priority in assuring better management of the education system should focus on the institutionalization of a coherent and systematic communication program on education in general including the objectives of the reform. Such a program would target teachers and civil society.

VI.4 HIV/AIDS

(1st through 3rd years—2005-08). Although rates of HIV/AIDS are low compared with other countries in the region, the proximity of Benin to such countries with high rates of HIV/AIDS places Benin at risk for higher incidences of the disease. With the assistance of organizations such as the Mobile Task Team-West (MTT-West), we propose a continuation of awareness-raising of all members of the educational system (teaching and administrative personnel, parents, and students) in the prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS.

VI.5 Equity

Benin has made great strides in increasing rates of girls' access to schooling, but certain areas of the country have lagged behind. To assure greater equity within the educational system, we propose the following activities:

- Facilitate collaboration with existing women's associations (Association of Women Jurists, FAWE, women entrepreneurs) to increase girls' education (1st through 3rd years—2005-08)
- Support women's associations in their involvement in education, especially mothers' associations at the local level (1st through 3rd years—2005-08)
- Develop and generalize, in those zones with weak rates of girls' education, a system of mentoring and tutoring (1st through 5th years—2005-10)

Assuming increased levels of funding

In addition to the high priority areas discussed above, we propose the following activities assuming an increase of funding of 25% over historical levels:

VI.6 Curriculum

(2nd and 3rd years—2006-08). According to many of our respondents, the current curriculum is not well adapted to the actual levels of many of the teachers and students. We suggest that

the curriculum and guides be simplified in terms of language and volume to better adapt them to the level of students and teachers. We therefore propose the following:

- A progressive and continued evaluation by teacher training centers on:
 - (1) Student knowledge and competence in relation to the curriculum at each level;
 - (2) The coherence of the curriculum from grades 1 through 6; and
 - (3) The linkage with middle school (the first cycle of secondary school).
- Concerted discussions with teachers and teacher trainers on the evaluation of their suggestions.
- Validation by international and national experts.
- Revision and simplification of the curriculum to assure internal consistency at each level, in the entirety of the primary curriculum, and with the linkage of the primary curriculum to the secondary curriculum.

This would be done in a progressive and continuous fashion during ENI training. After two years functioning of the ENI, and their training in the new study program, we suggest a synthesis workshop bringing together teachers and some student teachers to finalize and adopt corrections to the curriculum. During this workshop of approximately 2 to 3 weeks, the problems and proposed solutions that have surfaced during two years of training will be discussed with a team of international and national experts to adopt modifications and bring teaching guides more in line with the curriculum. The advantage of this approach is that the cost would be much lower than the strategies currently in force for curriculum revision.

VI.7 Primary and Secondary Linkage

(1st year—2005-06). To integrate the primary with the secondary curriculum, we propose the following activities:

- Evaluate the experimentation of new programs in secondary education
- Harmonize the primary level study program with the new programs in secondary education
- Revise the new programs of secondary education
- Bring the new program to scale in secondary education (reproduction, distribution, and training)

VI.8 Other Equity Issues

(1st year—2005-06): In addition to improving girls' chances of obtaining education, we have identified other areas in which USAID intervention can improve equity. Specifically, we suggest that USAID consider assistance to Benin in planning and implementing strategies for the education of other disadvantaged groups (handicapped, children in inaccessible areas, out of school youth) through the following activities:

- Support for specialized schools for the handicapped
- Integration of handicapped children into regular schools at the community level

- Expansion of practical vocational training of the type currently offered by the NGO, SONGHAI (e.g., agriculture, pastoral, mechanical, etc.)

Annex 1: Chronogramme: Priorité des activités recommandées (Recommended Activities by Priority)

| Activités Prioritaires pour l'USAID | Année proposée pour la mise en œuvre | Priorité dans le court terme | Priorité dans la prochaine stratégie sectorielle |
|---|--|------------------------------|---|
| 1. Etablir un cadre structuré pour l'organisation, le fonctionnement, l'administration, et les contenus de programmes des ENI. Ce cadre doit prendre en compte les points ci-après: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Critère de recrutement des élèves maîtres ○ Critère de recrutement des formateurs ○ Critère de recrutement du personnel administratif ○ Contenu des formations. (Définir le syllabus pour chaque cours avec la formation générale, la pédagogie et les NPE. La formation devant s'appliquer aux NPE, les formateurs et les élèves maîtres relèveront au cours des séances les insuffisances et les incohérences en vue des révisions pour la simplification des programmes, des guides et des manuels) ○ Programme de formation ○ Manuel de procédures administratives et pédagogiques | 1 ^{ère} année— 2005-06 | Grande priorité | N/A |
| 2. Appuyer la mise en place des ENI (Assist the establishment of ENI) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Production et acquisition du matériel pédagogique ○ Formation des formateurs | 2 ^{ème} année— 2006-07 | N/A | Grande priorité |
| 3. Revitaliser le Réseau d'Animation Pédagogique en renforçant les capacités de la DIP à travers une collaboration étroite avec IFESH et une assistance technique de IFESH et mettre à disposition des CS les moyens adéquats pour leur fonctionnement pour : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ assurer une bonne supervision des CS ○ le suivi et l'évaluation trimestriel (ou périodique) dans toutes les CS ○ la formation des enseignants (formations de proximité courtes et pratiques pour des besoins spécifiques comme par exemple ○ l'exécution et l'utilisation des évaluations des connaissances des élèves) ○ la loi contre les abus envers les élèves (law against inappropriate student/teacher interaction) | 1 ^{ère} à 3 ^{ème} année— 2005-08 | Grande priorité | Grande priorité pour l'assistance technique; priorité moyenne pour l'appui CS |

| | | | |
|--|---|------------------|------------------|
| <p>4. Simplifier les programmes et les guides en termes de langage et de volume pour mieux les adapter au niveau des élèves et des enseignants (cf recommandation 1)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Une évaluation progressive et continue dans les ENI de: (1) la connaissance et la compétence des élèves par rapport aux programmes de chaque niveau; (2) la cohérence des matériels du CI au CM2, et (3) l'articulation avec le 1er cycle du secondaire. • Une concertation avec les enseignants et les personnels d'encadrement de toutes les évaluations et suggestions. • Une validation par des experts internationaux et nationaux. • La révision des programmes pour les simplifier et assurer d'une part leurs coherences internes par niveau et globalement, et d'autre part leur articulation avec le secondaire. | 2 ^{ème} à 3 ^{ème} année—2006-08 | N/A | Priorité moyenne |
| <p>5. Former de façon pratique les enseignants à l'exécution et à l'utilisation des résultats de l'évaluation (cf formation) pour :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faire le feedback aux élèves et aux parents • Utiliser les résultats pour réorienter les leçons | 2 ^{ème} à 3 ^{ème} année—2006-08 | Priorité moyenne | Grande priorité |
| <p>6. L'intégration des programmes du primaire et du secondaire :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluer l'expérimentation des nouveaux programmes à l'enseignement secondaire • Harmoniser les NPE et les nouveaux programmes de l'enseignement secondaire • Réviser nouveaux programmes de l'enseignement secondaire • Vulgariser les nouveaux programmes (reproduction, distribution, formation) | 1 ^{ère} année—2005-06 | Grande priorité | Grande priorité |
| <p>7. Institutionnaliser un programme de communication cohérent et systématique sur l'éducation en général y compris sur les objectifs de la réforme envers les enseignants et la société civile</p> | 1 ^{ère} à 3 ^{ème} année—2005-08 | Grande priorité | Priorité moyenne |
| <p>8. Appuyer la mise en œuvre des plans de développement de l'éducation au niveau communal par :</p> | 1 ^{ère} à 5 ^{ème} année—2005-10 | | |

| | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> La concertation entre les ONG internationales, nationales, les élus locaux et les acteurs de l'éducation du cabinet MEPS aux directeurs d'école et enseignants, sur le thème de la collaboration avec le système éducatif (1^{ère} année) | 1 ^{ère} à 3 ^{ème} année—2005-08 | Grande priorité | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> L'obligation de collaborer avec les autorités locales et le système éducatif par toutes les ONG financées par l'USAID au niveau local (2^{ème}-5^{ème} année) | 2 ^{ème} année | Priorité moyenne | Priorité moyenne |
| 9. Appuyer équité dans le système éducatif | 1 ^{ère} à 5 ^{ème} année—2005-10 | -- | -- |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Faciliter la collaboration avec les associations de femmes existantes (Association des Femmes Juristes, FAWE, femmes entrepreneurs) pour accroître la scolarisation des filles : | 1 ^{ère} à 3 ^{ème} année—2005-08 | Priorité moyenne | Priorité moyenne |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appuyer les associations de femmes, spécialement les associations des mères d'élèves au niveau local pour leur implication dans l'éducation | 1 ^{ère} à 3 ^{ème} année—2005-08 | Grande Priorité dans les zones a faible TBS filles | Priorité moyenne |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Généraliser, dans les zones à faible taux de scolarisation des filles, le système de parrainage (mentor) et de tutorat | 1 ^{ère} à 5 ^{ème} année—2005-10 | Grande Priorité dans les zones a faible TBS filles | Grande Priorité dans les zones a faible TBS filles |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planifier et mettre en oeuvre des stratégies pour la scolarisation des autres groupes défavorisés (handicapés, enfants des zones enclavées, enfants déscolarisées) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appui aux écoles spécialisées pour handicapés Ecole intégratrice pour l'intégration à base communautaire des handicapés Formation du genre SONGHAI (professionnelle, pratique, en agriculture, élevage, mécanique, etc.) | 1 ^{ère} année—2005-06 | Priorité moyenne | Priorité moyenne |

| | | | |
|--|---|---|--------------------|
| 10. Poursuivre la sensibilisation de tous les acteurs du système éducatif (personnel enseignants, administratif, parents et élèves) à la prévention contre le VIH/SIDA | 1 ^{ère} à 3 ^{ème} année— 2005-08 | Grande Priorité pour les enseignants | Grande Priorité |
|--|---|---|--------------------|

Annex II: Methodology Outline

Sampling Frame – non-random, stratified sample of:

Schools

- School Types
- 6 Departments
- 12 school district: 1 urban and 1 rural for each department
- 24 schools: 1 private and 1 public for each school district

Respondents

- School Actor(s)
- Director
- Teachers
- Parents
- Students

Key Informant Interviews

- USAID implementation partners
- MEPS agents

Methodological Frame & Possible Issues

Positionality

We are perceived as experts/officials, so we need to minimize our influence on other's answers. Some suggestions for limiting the potential for this are:

- Avoid making statements especially of opinion
- Pose questions simply without embedding an answer
- If necessary to improve respondents' comprehension, rephrase questions indicating a range of possible answers.

Data Collection Methods

- Key Informant/One-on-One Interviews
- Actor(s)
- Partners
- Heads of Departments/Offices w/in MEPS
- School Directors

Possible Issues

- Ask shorter more specific questions emerging from our general and sub-themes to focus conversation more on information needed
- One person uses interview guide to conduct the interview, the other person takes careful and thorough (as much as possible) notes

Focus Group Interviews

Actor(s)

- Members of an office
- Teachers
- Parents
- Students

Possible Issues

- Make sure everyone has a chance to contribute and that one person does not dominate the conversation
- One person uses interview guide to conduct the interview, the other person takes careful and thorough (as much as possible) notes

Classroom Observation

- Actor(s)
- Teacher
- Teaching assistant
- Students

Possible Issues

- Team members should pay careful attention and take as thorough notes as possible
- Pay special attention to the uses of language in the class and teacher/student interaction

Short Survey

- Actor(s)
- School Directors

Possible Issues

- Make sure to get as much data as possible
- May want to ask for the annual end of year report to make a copy

Deliverables for Each Interview

Interview information sheet containing basic information about who, what, where when, and purpose.

Interview notes summarizing information obtained in an organized and clear manner. If possible, try to organize the summary in terms of the main report themes, but if that logic doesn't work well then use one that does. These will facilitate our brainstorming/analysis of the data.

Short Survey Questionnaire completed for each visit with a school director

Typed classroom observation notes for each class visit synthesizing the observations of both team members.

Documents collected during course of interview.

Results: A file on each visit containing all necessary information to easily identify

- What, where, when, with whom, and for what purpose the meeting took place
- Information learned (in summary) such that it can be used by other team members in writing their sections of the final report
- Information on basic school data (if applicable) such that it can be used by other team members in writing their sections of the final report
- Information on classroom dynamics (if applicable) such that it can be used by other team members in writing their sections of the final report

Annex III: Plan de Travail (Work Plan)

Evaluation du Programme d'Assistance a l'USAID á la Réforme de l'Education au Bénin
(Assessment of the USAID Assistance Program to the Reform of the Benin Primary Education System)
DevTech Systems

| Activités | Echéance/Période | Résultats | Responsable + Impliquées | Observations |
|--|--|--|---|-----------------------------|
| Deliverables/Résultats : Detailed work plan | | | | |
| Premières lectures et rencontres | 27-29 juin 2005 | Mise a niveau de l'équipe | Tous | FAIT |
| Premières visites d'écoles : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - identification des premières écoles - visite de l'école « Les Tisserins » - Prétest des guides d'entretien des directeurs et enseignants | 28 juin 05 28 juin 05 28 juin 05 | - Ecole visitée Instrument de collecte prétesté | Francine Jennifer, Francine Jennifer, Francine | FAIT |
| Elaboration du plan de travail : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - première ébauche - discussions - finalisation | 29 juin 2005 29 juin 2005 30 juin 2005 30 juin – 1 ^{er} juillet 2005 | - Le plan de travail finalisé et disponible | <u>Francine</u> , David Tous <u>Francine</u> <u>Mike</u> | FAIT |
| Soumission du plan de travail préliminaire a l'USAID | 1 ^{er} Juillet 2005 | Plan de travail soumis à l'USAID | Mike | Transmis à Eric et à Romain |
| Data collection | | | | |
| Revue documentaire <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - liste des documents à consulter - répartition des documents à lire - revue de la littérature - revue des statistiques | 30 juin 2005 30 juin 2005 → 11 juillet 05 | Mise à niveau et information de l'équipe | Mike Mike Tous | En cours |

| | | | | |
|---|--|--|---|--|
| | → 15 juillet 05 | | Jennifer | |
| Identification exhaustive des informations à collecter (formation des enseignants, NPE, scolarisation des filles, impact USAID,...) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - revue du SOW et propositions - discussions et - amendement | 29- 30 juin 05 30 juin 05 1 ^{er} juillet 05 | Liste information à collecter établie | David, Mike Tous David, <u>Mike</u> | En cours |
| Identification de la population à enquêter ou interviewer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposition • Discussion • amendement | 30 juin- 1 ^{er} juillet 05 1 ^{er} juillet 05 | Liste structures et personnes à contacter établie | Jennifer, <u>Prudencia</u> Tous Jennifer | FAIT |
| Elaboration des outils de collecte de données : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ébauche des questions - adéquation avec les résultats et les objectifs de l'évaluation - Finalisation des questionnaires, - Elaboration et finalisation des guides d'entretien et - Elaboration et finalisation des fiches de lecture - Prétest des guides d'entretien | 27 juin 05 1 ^{er} juillet 05 1-4 juillet 05 1-4 juillet 05 30 juin – 1 ^{er} juillet 05 28 juin 2005 | Instruments de collectes de données finalisés et disponibles | Jennifer Jennifer, Tous <u>Jennifer</u> , Prudencia <u>Jennifer</u> , Prudencia Francine, <u>Mike</u> | Projet rédigé en cours de finalisation |
| Organisation des visites de terrain : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - contact à prendre pour les rencontres (MEPS Partenaires USAID, Bénéficiaires -élèves, écoles, parents-, Société civile, Syndicats, Communes) - tenue et mise à jour du calendrier des rencontres | 29 juin- 15 juillet 05 29 juin – 15 juillet 05 | Plan de rencontre et calendrier établis | <u>Prudencia</u> Mike, <u>Prudencia</u> | En cours |
| Elaboration de la méthodologie de collecte de données (objectifs, échantillon, outils de collecte, axes d'analyse) : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - projet | 1 ^{er} – 4 juillet 05 | Méthodologie de travail mise au point et adoptée | <u>Jennifer</u> , tous | En cours de finalisation |

| | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|----------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - discussions et - amendement et finalisation | 4 juillet 05 5 juillet 05 | | Tous Jennifer | |
| Multiplication des outils de collecte <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - définir les quantités - faire les photocopies | 4 juillet 05 5 juillet 05 | Instruments de collecte disponibles en quantité suffisante | Tous <u>David</u> | |
| Analyse des données | | | | |
| Synthèse des résultats en matière de formation des enseignants, NPE, scolarisation des filles..., sur l'impact USAID, contraintes de mise en œuvre, contraintes sectorielles, approches de solution <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Synthèse individuelle - Présentation au sein de l'équipe - Récapitulation globale des revues documentaires - Récapitulation globale des statistiques et des données collectées - Récapitulation des approches de solutions | 15-18 juillet 05 18 juillet 05 19 juillet 05 19 juillet 05 19-20 juillet 05 | Résultats synthétisés pour restitution | Tous Tous David Jennifer Mike | |
| Présentation des résultats de l'évaluation a l'USAID | | | | |
| Préparation de la présentation des résultats a l'USAID : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conception - fichiers PowerPoint, - support à distribuer - contact avec USAID pour date, heure et autres | 20 juillet 05 20-21 juillet 05 15 – 20 juillet 05 | Préparation réalisée et prête pour présentation | <u>Mike</u> , Francine Francine Francine, <u>David</u> Mike | |
| Présentation des résultats et soumission des supports | 22 juillet 05 | Résultats présentés Supports remis | Mike | |
| Soumission et restitution du second draft | | | | |
| Identification des sections composant le rapport: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - projet de plan - discussions et amendement | 1 ^{er} juillet 05 4 juillet 05 | Projet de plan du rapport finalisé | Mike Mike, tous | En cours |

| | | | | |
|--|---|--|---|--|
| Sections assignées aux membres de l'équipe rédaction | 4 juillet 05 5- 21 juillet 05 | Sections attribuées à chaque membre | Mike, tous Tous | |
| Première ébauche réalisée consolidée pour lecture par les réviseurs | 21 – 22 juillet 03 | Second draft révisé | Tous | |
| Lecture annotation du draft - répartition des rôles de lecteurs internes - lecture et revue | 22 juillet 23-26 juillet 05 | | Mike Tous | |
| Amélioration des drafts : - Revue collective et - amendement et - traduction en français - Finalisation individuelle des drafts - Revue et consolidation - Traduction en anglais | 26 juillet a 14h 26-27 juillet 26-27 juillet pour le 27 juillet a 18h 27-28 juillet 28 juillet – 2 août 2005 | Draft finalisé Rapport disponible en français et en anglais | Tous Tous, David Tous Mike <u>Mike</u> , Jennifer | |
| Restitution à l'USAID : - Préparation de la présentation des résultats : o Conception, o réalisation, o logistique - Organisation de la présentation (date, heure, doc.) - Présentation et soumission - Prise en compte des commentaires et Révision du draft | 27 juillet 05 27-28 juillet 05 21-28 juillet 05 22-28 juillet 05 29 juillet 05 30 juillet 05 | Draft présenté, discuté et amendé | Mike Francine David David Tous <u>Francine</u> , Mike Mike, | |
| Soumission du draft révisé à l'USAID | 3 août 2005 | Draft soumis | Mike | |
| Rapport Final | | | | |
| Transmission des commentaires à Mike et aux autres membres de l'équipe. | Au plus tard le 12 août 2005 | Commentaires sur draft reçus | Eric/BET/USAID | |
| Etude des commentaires | 13 août 2005 | | tous | |

| | | | | |
|--|---|-----------------------------------|---|------|
| Téléconférence avec tous les membres de l'équipe pour la revue des commentaires reçus. | | | tous | |
| Prise en compte des commentaires | 13-14 août 2005 | | | |
| Révision du rapport version française et transmission à Mike | 15-16 août 2005 | | Mike, tous <u>Francine</u> , Prudencia Mike <u>Mike</u> Jennifer | |
| Adoption des révisions de la version française | | | | |
| Révision de la version anglaise | | | | |
| Transmission à DevTech (versions anglaise et française) | Au plus tard le 17 août 2005 | | Mike | |
| Logistique | | | | |
| Louer une voiture avec chauffeur | 28Juin 2005 → | Voiture avec chauffeur disponible | Mike Jennifer | FAIT |
| Chercher un bureau et signer un contrat de secrétariat (accès facile aux services de photocopie, Internet, impression) | 28 juin 05 – 1 ^{er} juillet 05 | Bureau disponible | Mike Jennifer | FAIT |

Annex IV: Biographies of Evaluators

To conduct this evaluation USAID/Benin hired DevTech Systems, a Virginia based consulting firm. DevTech Systems assembled the evaluation team for this Task Order (TO) to reflect both the technical expertise considerations outlined under the TO as well as the regional and specific technical expertise necessary to carry out this evaluation effectively.

Our team is comprised of Dr. Michael J. Midling, Dr. Jennifer L. Mandel, Ms. Prudencia Zinsou, Ms. Francine Ahouanmènou-Agueh, and Dr. Emmanuel M. David-Gnahoui.

Dr. Midling, Senior Evaluation Specialist and Team Leader, has twenty years of evaluation experience and is a specialist on international comparative education. He has carried out evaluations of long-term projects in the US and abroad.

Dr. Mandel, Social Scientist, is an expert in gender and development, with 8 years of research experience. Having completed her doctoral study and dissertation on Benin, her knowledge of Benin and expertise in gender issues enable her to provide the socio-cultural and behavioral analysis for the evaluation.

Ms. Agueh, Community Development Specialist, has 13 years of experience in education planning and 30 years as an educator in West Africa, the U.S. and France. Over the past six years, she has focused on implementing and evaluating girls' education programs in Benin and Francophone Africa.

Ms. Zinsou, our second Community Development Specialist, has worked within Benin's educational system for more than 25 years.

Finally, we wish to thank the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MEPS) for seconding Dr. Emmanuel M. David-Gnahoui to work with the team. Dr. David-Gnahoui has 20 years experience in education, including nine years experience as a secondary school teacher in Benin, and made many valuable contributions to this report.

Annex V: Guide d'entretien general (General Interview Guide)

1. Recrutement & Formation des Enseignants
 - A - Recrutement
 - Politique de base
 - Données sur les dix dernières années
 - Configuration actuelle du personnel enseignant
 - Politique actuelle de recrutement du personnel
 - Perspectives
 - B – Formation
 - Formation initiale
 - Formation continue
 - Formation spéciale, recyclage et stages
 - Politique actuelle de formation
 - Perspectives
2. Activités Pédagogiques
 - Durée de l'année scolaire
 - Animation pédagogique
 - Organisation du Réseau d'Animation Pédagogique
 - Suivi des activités pédagogiques
3. Matériel Pédagogique
 - Conception / Révision du matériel pédagogique
 - Acquisition / Distribution du matériel pédagogique
 - Financement du volet matériel pédagogique
 - Intervention des parents
 - Adaptation du matériel pédagogique à l'environnement socioculturel
 - Adequation du matériels pédagogique au niveau des enseignments et des élèves
4. Education Pour Quoi?
 - Définition d'une scolarisation réussie
 - Rôle des enseignants, directeurs, autorités ministérielles dans l'éducation
 - Rôle des collectivités locales et des opérateurs économiques
 - Débouchés traditionnels de l'école
5. Gestion Administrative et Financière
 - Le budget et l'exécution
 - Les sources
 - Mécanisme de prise de décisions
6. Imputabilité et Supervision
 - A quel fréquence visite les agents de MEPS (CCS, CP, DEPS, etc.)

- Forme d'assistance
 - Encadrement du corps du contrôle
7. SCOFI
- Performance des filles par rapport aux garçons
 - Retention des filles
 - Taux d'abandonnement des filles
 - Taux de promotion des filles
 - Taux des filles redoublants
 - Predisposition culturel sur l'éducation des filles
 - Division de travail marquée par les gens
8. VIH/SIDA
- Curriculum sur VIH/SIDA
 - Formation des enseignants et directeurs
 - Promotion de ABC (Abstain, Be Faithful, Use Condoms)
 - Distribution de *L'amour et vie* à l'écoles
 - Predisposition culturel de l'éducation sur VIH/SIDA
 - Stigmatisation des gens avec VIH/SIDA
9. Société Civile
- Participation des parents (APE)
 - Participation de communauté
 - Participation de communauté dans le gestion des cantines
 - Approvisionnement des cantines par le communauté

Annex VI: Questionnaire et Guide d'Entretien pour les Directeurs d'Ecoles
(Questionnaire and Interview Guide for School Directors)

| | |
|---|--|
| Combien d'élèves y a-t-il au total dans l'école? | |
| Combien d'élèves sont des redoublants dans l'école? | |
| Quel est le pourcentage de filles dans l'école ? | |
| Dans quel groupe (filles/garçons) enregistre-t-on le plus de redoublement ? | |
| Quelle classe enregistre le plus de redoublement ? | |
| Quelle est la taille moyenne des classes ? | |
| Combien d'élèves sont régulièrement présents en classe ? Avez-vous un fort taux d'absence ? En quelle période de l'année enregistrez-vous le plus d'absence ? Pourquoi ? | |
| Combien des manuels de CM2 mathématique et de français avez-vous reçus cette année ? Quand ? | |
| Quelle a été la durée de l'année scolaire écoulée ? | |
| Quelle était la durée moyenne de l'année scolaire pendant les 6 dernières années ? | |
| Taux d'abandon des filles des trois dernières années | |
| Combien d'enseignants ont été formés aux NPE ? | |
| Combien d'enseignants ont été recyclés aux NPE ? | |
| De quelle formation avez-vous le plus besoin en ce moment ? | |
| De quel matériel pédagogique manquez-vous le plus ? | |
| De quelle forme de soutien avez-vous besoin du corps d'encadrement ? | |
| Quand avez-vous reçu la dernière formation sur l'Equité-genre ? | |
| Qui vous a fait la formation sur l'Equité-genre? | |
| Quand avez-vous reçu la dernière formation sur le VIH/SIDA | |
| Qui vous a fait la formation sur le VIH/SIDA ? | |
| Combien d'enseignantes ont abandonné leur classe ? Pourquoi ? | |

1. Recrutement & Formation des Enseignants

A - Recrutement

- Politique de base
- Données sur les dix dernières années
- Configuration actuelle du personnel enseignant
- Politique actuelle de recrutement du personnel
- Perspectives

B – Formation

- Formation initiale
- Formation continue
- Formation spéciale, recyclage et stages
- Politique actuelle de formation
- Perspectives

2. Activités Pédagogiques

- Durée de l'année scolaire
- Animation pédagogique
- Organisation du Réseau d'Animation Pédagogique

- Suivi des activités pédagogiques
3. Matériel Pédagogique
 - Conception / Révision du matériel pédagogique
 - Acquisition / Distribution du matériel pédagogique
 - Financement du volet matériel pédagogique
 - Intervention des parents
 - Adaptation du matériel pédagogique à l'environnement socioculturel
 - Adequation du matériels pédagogique au niveau des enseignements et des élèves
 4. Education Pour Quoi?
 - Définition d'une scolarisation réussie
 - Rôle des enseignants, directeurs, autorités ministérielles dans l'éducation
 - Rôle des collectivités locales et des opérateurs économiques
 - Débouchés traditionnels de l'école
 5. Gestion Administrative et Financière
 - Le budget et l'exécution
 - Les sources
 - Mécanisme de prise de décisions
 6. Imputabilité et Supervision
 - A quel fréquence visite les agents de MEPS (CCS, CP, DEPS, etc.)
 - Forme d'assistance
 - Encadrement du corps du contrôle
 7. Scolarisation de filles
 - Performance des filles par rapport aux garçons
 - Retention des filles
 - Taux d'abandonnement des filles
 - Taux de promotion des filles
 - Taux des filles redoublants
 - Predisposition culturel sur l'éducation des filles
 - Division de travail marquée par les gens
 8. VIH/SIDA
 - Curriculum sur VIH/SIDA
 - Formation des enseignants et directeurs
 - Promotion de ABC (Abstain, Be Faithful, Use Condoms)
 - Distribution de *L'amour et vie* a l'écoles
 - Predisposition culturel de l'éducation sur VIH/SIDA
 - Stigmatisation des gens avec VIH/SIDA
 9. Société Civile
 - Participation des parents (APE)
 - Participation de communauté
 - Participation de communauté dans le gestion des cantines
 - Approvisionnement des cantines par le communauté

Annex VII: Programme de visite de terrain (Site Visit Itinerary)**MISSION D'EVALUATION DE L'USAID****SEMAINE DU 11 AU 16 JUILLET 2005****EQUIPE N°1 :****CHEF D'EQUIPE : MICHAEL MIDLING****MEMBRE : PRUDENCIA ZINSOU**

| DEPARTEMENT | CIRCONSCRIPTION SCOLAIRE | ARRIVEE | DEPART |
|---------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|---------------|
| ATLANTIQUE LITTORAL | Cotonou Lagune | PM | PM |
| | Toffo | Jeudi matin | Jeudi soir |
| OUEME PLATEAU | Porto Novo Oganla | Vendredi fin matinée | Vendredi soir |
| | Sakété | Mercredi matin | Mercredi soir |
| ZOU COLLINES | Abomey | Dimanche soir | Mardi soir |
| | Glazoué | Lundi matin | Lundi soir |

EQUIPE N°2 :**CHEF D'EQUIPE : JENNIFER MANDEL****MEMBRE : EMMANUEL M. DAVID-GNAHOUI**

| DEPARTEMENT | CIRCONSCRIPTION SCOLAIRE | ARRIVEE | DEPART |
|----------------|--------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| BORGOU ALIBORI | Parakou (2) | Dimanche soir | Mardi soir |
| | Gogounou | Lundi matin | Lundi soir |
| ATACORA DONGA | Kouandé | Mercredi matin | Mercredi soir |
| | Djougou | Mardi soir | Jeudi soir à Lokossa |
| MONO COUFFO | Comé | Vendredi après-midi | Samedi matin |
| | Dogbo | Vendredi matin | Vendredi fin matinée |

Annex VIII: Liste Des Personnes Rencontrées (List of Persons Met With)

| STRUCTURES | NOMS ET PRENOMS | QUALITES |
|---------------------|----------------------------|---|
| USAID | THOMAS Rudolph | DIRECTEUR |
| | BABAGBETO Roman | CTO/ BET |
| | SOSOUHOUNTO Eric James | BET |
| | QUENUM Cosme | BET |
| | ATCHADE Pierre | |
| MEPS | KARIMOU Rafiatou | Ministre |
| | LOKOSSOU Cyprien | DC/MEPS |
| | OWOLABI Patrice | DEP / MEPS |
| | DJIHOUESSI Blaise | D / INFRE |
| | ZEVOUNOU Marie-Louise | SG /INFRE |
| | GNIMASSOU Eugène | C/S - INFRE |
| | KOUKOU Iène | C/CGMPE |
| | HOUETO Laurent | Pilote/MS |
| | MENSAH Félix | Pilote/PE |
| | AKOTANGNI Pauline | Co-pilote/PE |
| | ADJIBOYE Lasse | Pilote/ Evaluation |
| | EGBETOWOKPO Augustin | Pilote/Rés. Doc |
| | AMOUSSOU Albert | Co-pilote/Rés. Doc |
| | ATONDE | Pilote/Form |
| | HODONOU Gaston | Co-Pilote/Form |
| | GNAHOUI Emmanuel David | Pilote/EQF |
| | YESSOUFOU Akimi | Co-Pilote/EQF |
| | FATOKE Clémence | C/CAR/ENI |
| | GBENOU Pierre | Assistant /CAR/ENI |
| ATLANTIQUE-LITTORAL | BANBOLA Charles | Directeur |
| | GOTOECHAN Grégoire | CCS/Cot. Lagune |
| | ADELEKE Maizinou | CCS/Ab-Calavi |
| | ADJEVI Christophe | CCS/Allada |
| | BEHETON Espérance | Dir/EPP Allada/A |
| | HESSOU Jean | Syndicat National LINAB |
| | SAVI Emmanuel | OSYAB |
| | KEKE d'ASCENSION | Syndicat National des Enseignants du Primaire |
| | HOUEDENOU Bernard Phylippe | Syndicat National des Enseignants de la Maternelle et du Primaire |
| ATACORA-DONGA | MOSSE Esse | CCS/Kouande |
| | ADJOVI Mevognon | CCS/Djougu I |
| | ADAM Salifou | Conseiller APE |
| | ZOUMADA Sabikou | Chargé d'infrastructure APE |
| | CONGACOU Fousséni | Vice Président APE |

| STRUCTURES | NOMS ET PRENOMS | QUALITES |
|-----------------|-----------------------------|--|
| | DARRA Razakou | Secrétaire Général APE |
| | ALBARKA Saffo | Secrétaire Adjoint APE |
| | ADAMOU Mounirou | Trésorier Général Adjoint APE |
| | ADAMOU A. Harouna | Trésorier Général APE |
| | SILLA Miftaou | Président APE |
| BORGOU-ALIBORI | IYOKO Innocent | C/CS GOCOUNOU |
| | OROU MANI Zachary | C/CS PARAKOU II |
| | YOROU N'Goye Sidi | Vice Président CAPE |
| | GADO Orou Zimé | Secrétaire Général CAPE |
| | TAMOU Kora | Secrétaire Général Adjoint APE |
| | SERO Tamou | C/S-CAD Mairie |
| MONO-COUFFO | HAMENOU Kouame | CCS/ Dogbo |
| OUEME-PLATEAUX | FASSINOU Clémentine | Directrice |
| | AHOKPOSSI Roch | CCS/ Sakete |
| | AÏLEHOU Kifuli | D/EPP.Adjarra/B |
| | ABISSI Ferdinand | D/EPp Les Palmiers |
| | HOUNTO Loko Lucien | Secrétaire Général Sous Préfecture de Sakété |
| ZOU-COLLINES | MOUSTAPHA Moussiliou | Directeur |
| | SOGLO Jérôme | CCS/Abomey |
| | TABE Essè Honorat | CCS/ Glazoué |
| RNPSF | BOCCO ALI Agnès | Coordonnatrice |
| GLOBE | ALIOU EMMANUEL Alidjennatou | Coordonnatrice Nationale |
| IFESH | DAYAMBA Michel | Représ. Résident. |
| | JAQUET Mohamed | Chargé Suivi & Evaluation |
| | MONKON Frédéric | Chargé Formation |
| EQUIPE | N'TCHOUGAN S. Christina | Chef du Projet Equipe |
| | COSSOU Magloire | |
| | COSSI Calixte | |
| | MARTIN Gisèle | |
| CARE BENIN | OSSENI Amadou | |
| World Education | ALAN Miller | Chef de Projet |
| | SODOLOUFO Mélanie | Chargée de programme Mono Couffo |
| | ADENIYI Ganiyatou | Chargée de programme Borgou /Alibori |
| | OGOUCHINA Josué | Chargée de programme |
| World Learning | MONGBO Jérôme | Chef de Projet |

| STRUCTURES | NOMS ET PRENOMS | QUALITES |
|-----------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Ambassade du Danemark | AHANHANZO Joseph | Chargé du Programme Education |
| Coopération Française | HUSSON Guillaume | CT/DEP/MEPS |
| UNICEF | DOSSOU G. Sulpice | |
| MAIRIES | ZINSOU Edmond | Maire d'Adjarra |
| | HOUNTO Loko Lucien | SG /Mairie de Sakété |
| | OUOROU Bio N'morou | Maire de Djougou |

Liste des personnes rencontrées dans les écoles

| DEPARTEMENT | NOMS ET PRENOMS | STATUT |
|-------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| ATACORA-DONGA | KPATINDE Prosper | Directeur Tépaba/A |
| | IDRISSOU Rahamatou | Contractuelle CM2 /A |
| | AMOUSSA Raimatou | Contractuelle CE1/A |
| | LANDJOHOU Reine | Enseignante CI /A |
| | SOUMANOU Roubatou | Communautaire CP/A |
| | AGASSOUNON Gervais | Directeur Tépaba/B |
| | DJOSSOU Rosalie | Contractuelle CE2/B |
| | NOUKANDJI Sabine | Communautaire CM2/B |
| | YOROU N'GOBI Rosalie | Contractuelle CM1/B |
| | BOUKARI Alassane | Directeur Tépaba/C |
| | TANGBANDJA Yatimpou | Communautaire CP/C |
| | YAHADJENIN Zouréha | Directrice Tépaba/D |
| | SOUMANOU Sabiratou | Enseignante CI/D |
| | TCHABI Tchakou Rosine | Contractuelle CP/D |
| | YAHADJENIN Zouréha | Enseignante CE2/D |
| BORGOU-ALIBORI | ZEZO A. Alexis | Directeur Sorou/B Parakou II |
| | CHABI SIDI Juliette | Communautaire |
| | AGBODJI Gérard | Directeur Sorou A Parakou II |
| | ADIFFON Claire | Communautaire |
| ZOU-COLLINES | ADJIBADE Hamadou | Directeur Ahouaga/A- Abomey |
| | SEDOKOUN C. François | Directeur Ahouaga/B- Abomey |
| | SOTTIN Olivier | Directeur Ahouaga/C- Abomey |
| | NOUNAGNON Béatrice | Directrice Vedji- DASSA |
| | SATOGNINA Servais | Directeur Hounkpogon |
| | KOKOU Albert | Directeur Thio/A |
| ATLANTIQUE- LITTORAL | MARCOS Elisabeth | Directrice EPp Les TISSERINS |
| | KITI Bibiane épouse TOSSE | Directrice EPP Abomey Calavi Centre |
| | BEHETON Espérance | Directrice EPP Allada/A |
| | BARBOZA Yollande épouse ANAGONOU | Directrice EPP Abomey Calavi/C |

| | | |
|----------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| MONO-COUFFO | TCHODO Lohossou Clément | Directeur EPP Mandankanmey/A |
| | HOVOR Kossi | Directeur EPP Mandankanmey/B |
| | HOUNNOUVI A. Cyprien | Directeur EPP Foncomè/A |
| | GAGA M. E. A. Prosper | Directeur EPP Foncomè/B |
| | KPANON Théodore | Directeur EPP Foncomè/C |
| | SENOU Cocou | Directeur EPP Comè/C |
| | AYIGLI S. Michel | Directeur EPP Comè/E |
| | AKLOZO Basile | Directeur EPP Comè/F |
| | HOUEDANOU Y. Innocent | Directeur EPP Comè/G |
| OUEME-PLATEAUX | MIGAN Pétronille | EPP Tokpota/A, CE2 |
| | ZANKRAN Justine | EPP Tokpota/A, CM1 |
| | ADJADI Raliatou E. | EPP Tokpota/B, CE2 |
| | FAGLA Appoline | EPP Tokpota/B, CM1 |
| | HOUNDJOU Françoise née DOSSOU-GOUEN | EPP Tokpota/B, CI |
| | SENOU Monique née KOUNOUHO | EPP Tokpota/B, CE1 |
| | TESSILIMI Nourou | EPP Tokpota/B, CP |
| | BAKARY A. Gafarou | EPP Tokpota/C, CM2 |
| | HOUETO O. G. Odette | EPP Tokpota/C, CE2 |
| | YOVOGAN Adèle épouse GBAGLO | EPP Tokpota/c, CMI |
| | ABISSI Ferdinand | Directeur Complexe Scolaire Les Palmiers P/N |
| | AIYEHOU Kifuli | Directeur EPP Adjarra Centre/B |

Annex IX: Ecoles Publiques Et Privées Visitées (Visits to Private and Public Schools)

| DEPARTEMENT | NOMS DES ECOLES PUBLIQUES ET PRIVEES VISITEES |
|---------------------|--|
| ATACORA-DONGA | EPP Pada / KOUANDE |
| | EPP Oroukayo / KOUANDE |
| | EPP L'AVENIR / DJOUGOU I |
| | EPP Tépaba / DJOUGOU I |
| BORGOU-ALIBORI | EPP Gourou Bansou / GOGOUNOU |
| | EPP Sori / GOGOUNOU |
| | EPP Sorou / PARAKOU II |
| | EPP Dakpararou |
| ZOU-COLLINES | Complexe Scolaire AHOUGA A-B-C / ABOMEY |
| | EPP La CIME - GLAZOUE |
| | EPP Vedji- DASSA |
| | Complexe Scolaire Thio - GLAZOUE |
| ATLANTIQUE-LITTORAL | EPP Les Tisserins - COTONOU |
| | EPP Calavi-Centre – ABOMEY CALAVI |
| | Complexe Scolaire Le Faucon – Abomey Calavi |
| | EPP Allada |
| MONO-COUFFO | EPP Mandankanmey/A |
| | EPP Mandankanmey/B |
| | EPP Foncomè/A |
| | EPP Foncomè/B |
| | EPP Foncomè/C |
| | EPP Comè/C |
| | EPP Comè/E |
| | EPP Comè/F |
| OUEME-PLATEAUX | EPP Comè/G |
| | EPP Tokpota/A |
| | EPP Tokpota/B |
| | EPP Tokpota/C |
| | Complexe Scolaire Les Palmiers - PORTO-NOVO |
| | Complexe Scolaire ADJARRA Centre |

Annex X: Fiche de Compte-Rendu d’Observation de Classe (Classroom Observation Instrument)

ECOLE :

MEMBRE(S) D’EQUIPE :

OÙ:

DATE ET HEURE :

- Participation d’élèves
- Interaction entre l’enseignant et les élèves
- Interaction parmi les élèves
- Usage et compréhension de la langue française dans les classes CM2

Annex XI: Statement of Work for the Evaluation and Assessment of Program Options for USAID/Benin Education Portfolio

I. PURPOSE

Recruit a contractor to provide a team of consultants to undertake an evaluation to assess the accomplishments of USAID support to the education sector in Benin. The assessment will document results, identify constraints, review USAID/Benin's transition strategy, and propose programming options for future USAID-funded support to the primary education system in Benin for the period of 2006-2011.

II. BACKGROUND

In 1991, the Government of Benin decided to reform its primary education system which was in total collapse as evidenced by the low enrollment rate of school aged children, in particular girls; lack of school infrastructure; equipment, and pedagogical materials; poorly qualified teachers; inappropriate use of already limited resources; and lack of planning tools. The system faced major constraints and challenges that needed to be addressed in a strategic and systemic manner.

Benin has made strides in the overall improvement of its education system. The major results of the USAID-funded basic education reform have created a shift from rote learning to competency based education in grades one through six. To achieve this, new curricula were designed and implemented; textbooks were produced, distributed and put in use; training modules were developed and used for teacher training; new student assessment tools were utilized; and the management capacity of supervisors was improved.

There is a total of 1.2 million primary school children of which 500,000 are girls. The gross primary school enrollment rate increased from 73% in 1997 to 94% in 2004. Girls' enrollment rate increased from 56% in 1997 to 81% in 2004 due in part to programs directed at increasing parents' awareness of the need for girls' education. The promotion rate increased from 67% to 73% in 2003 conceivably demonstrating the effectiveness of the new pedagogy. While overall primary school enrollment has increased, the gap between enrollment for boys and girls remains large. Many geographical areas continue to record low girls' enrollment. To reduce this gender gap, the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education has introduced measures aimed at recruiting and retaining female teachers, especially in rural areas.

USAID Education Program

USAID's education program focuses on improving the quality of basic education and children's access to primary education, in particular girls. Intended results of program activities are: promoting quality teaching and learning; increasing girls' enrollment, retention, and completion of primary education; involving communities in primary education; increasing awareness of students, parents, teachers, and education official of HIV/AIDS; and strengthening effective planning and management practices within the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education.

With USAID assistance, a total of 10,462 teachers received training in the use of the new teaching approaches and strategies in 2004. Additionally, 100,000 math textbooks, 100,000 French textbooks (each) and 60,000 teacher guides were printed and distributed.

Resources from the Africa Education Initiative were used to retrain more than 13,000 first, second, and third-grade teachers to reinforce their skills in the new student centered learning approach and to develop supplemental teaching and learning materials. Supervisors and inspectors in 36 school districts were trained in techniques to improve the supervision and coaching of teachers in primary schools. As a result, major positive changes have been observed. In the school districts benefiting from this activity the percentage of instructional classroom visits increased from 59% in 2003 to 93% in 2004. USAID is currently financing a peer-tutoring activity to increase retention of girls in schools and its implementing partners have conducted awareness-raising activities on the importance of girls' education in 90 communities reaching about 135,000 community members.

USAID has worked with the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MEPS) to improve overall management within the primary education system. To address long-standing problems with the quality of data, USAID helped the Ministry develop and adopt a manual on data collection procedures. New procedures will allow the Ministry to collect accurate education statistics. In addition, technical assistance to develop and pilot a school-mapping tool to improve planning and appropriate use of resources was also provided by USAID.

Other aspects of USAID's education program support include strengthening civil society through greater community involvement in managing schools by encouraging parents' organizations and other civil society groups to become actively involved in national and local efforts that formulate primary education policy. USAID provided management training to increase the number of structured and democratically-elected boards of parents associations to 1,200. Local NGOs also benefited from management training in accounting, project administration and human resources performance resulting in the strengthening of their capacity for assistance. Activities to raise awareness about HIV/AIDS among students, parents and education officials, and technical assistance to the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education to complete the Benin Education for All Plan are also part of USAID's program.

Constraints/Challenges

While USAID has assisted Benin in making impressive strides in the overall improvement of its education system, the primary education system continues to face major constraints. Most important are the shortage of adequately trained teachers, prolonged teacher strikes, and the inadequate capacity of MEPS to absorb financial resources made available to the sector, which continues to plague the system. Additional problems include low attendance for girls, insufficient number of classrooms leading to overcrowding, and civil society passivity in education.

The impact of the GOB's decision in 1987 to suspend the recruitment of new teachers is still felt today. In 2004, of the 24,500 teachers in the system only 55% were qualified to

teach. To address the severe shortage, the government's 2005 budget request includes funds to reopen one teacher training center. Denmark has pledged to complete the construction of a second teacher training center in 2005, and other donors are planning to commit funds to reopen additional teacher-training centers around the country. USAID plans to contribute technical and financial assistance to assist with curricula and other training materials development for the teacher training-centers.

Parallel issues impacting the teacher shortage are low salaries, poor living and working conditions, and inadequate pedagogical support. Subsequent to the introduction of the new study program in 1999-2000, teacher strikes have been recurrent. In October 2004, the school year began with strikes that lasted through December 2004. The school year resumed in January 2005 after intense negotiations between the government and teacher unions.

Benin's relatively weak civil society has not impacted long-term development in any significant manner and plays a minuscule role in the education sector. This, together with the lack of sufficient information communicated to the public on the education reform program, and in particular the new study program, has led to very low public support for the education reform.

The above difficulties, compounded by the lack of political will, high-level corruption, politicization of the administration, weak management skills, lack of monitoring and evaluation of activities, and low public awareness of HIV/AIDS impact on education, requires well thought-out interventions for providing technical assistance to Benin's primary education system

III. USAID PROGRAM OPTIONS UNDER CONSIDERATION FOR THE TRANSITION PLAN

USAID is restructuring how education development will take place in the future in accordance to the "White Paper: U.S. Foreign Aid Meeting the Challenges of the Twenty-first Century (<http://www.usaid.gov/policy/pdabz3221.pdf>). Within that context Benin has been categorized as a Transformational Development Country. For all countries in this classification the following Goals, Objectives and Indicators will be used to realize the impact of program synergies and provide for program uniformity across all similarly classified program. The recommended goals, objectives and indicators are as follows:

Goal 1: Promoting equitable access to quality basic education

Objectives/Indicators:

1. Increased access to education by marginalized populations.
 - Net enrollment rate disaggregated by sex
 - Net enrollment rate disaggregated by selected variables (region, urban/rural, ethnicity, religion)
 - Primary school completion rates disaggregated by sex
 - Primary school completion rates disaggregated by selected variables (region, urban/rural, ethnicity, religion)

2. Improved teaching and learning.
 - Number of teachers trained disaggregated by sex
 - Number of administrators trained disaggregated by sex
 - Delivery of quality language, math and science delivered to primary school enhanced
 - Decreased teacher-student ratio
 - Improved professional skills of teachers
3. Build governmental, non-governmental and community capacity to promote, direct and organize education
 - Improved policy environment
 - Improved effectiveness of education management
 - Improved quality of basic education delivery systems/services
 - Key policy reforms implemented
 - Improved capacity to respond to the impact of HIV/AIDS
 - Number of educators trained (participant training)
4. Increased literacy
 - Number of adult learners completing basic education programs
5. Increased efficiency in the education sector
 - Reduced drop-out rates
 - Reduction in repetition rates
 - Increased percentage of GDP for education

Goal 2: Strengthening the capacity of host country higher education

Objectives/Indicators:

1. Improved management of higher education
 - Increased financial management capacity for institutions of higher learning
 - Increased human resource management capacity for institutions of higher learning
 - Higher education institutional policies and programs adapted to the needs of sustainable development
2. Improved curriculum in higher education
 - Number of professors trained
 - Improved professional skills of professors
 - Curriculum expanded to include addressing host country development challenges

Goal 3: Improving access to productivity-increasing job skills

Objective/Indicators:

1. Improved job skills training

- Number of people trained for jobs disaggregated by sex
- Number of people securing jobs after skills training disaggregated by sex

Specifically within this context, USAID/Benin is finalizing its transition plan that will take the program from the current country strategic plan to the new one.

Proposed Options

The following options have been identified as possibilities by USAID/Benin and shall be used as a guide for final recommendations. However, all recommendations must fit within the framework outlined above using the goals, objectives and indicators as guiding principles for future program activities.

Improving pedagogical skills: The Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education plans to open a new teacher training center and two other donors have pledged support for opening two additional teacher training centers. At a minimum, USAID/Benin proposes to provide funding toward development of curricula and other training materials. Also, in the interim, USAID/Benin will strengthen further the pedagogical skills of existing teachers.

Encouraging community participation in school management: USAID/Benin suggests continuing to support community groups and local authorities to include planning for schools in the preparation and implementation of local development plans.

Encouraging girls' education: There is a significant gap in education levels between girls and boys in Benin. The development benefits of education for girls are well documented. USAID/Benin may develop assistance activities to close this gap.

Integrating HIV/AIDS into education activities: With national HIV prevalence rates already over 4%, there is strong potential for the rapid expansion of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Benin. To address this, USAID/Benin will work with the West African Mobile Task Team (MTT/West) for HIV/AIDS in Education to continue providing assistance to the Ministry in the design and implementation of an operational HIV/AIDS and Education sector policy, strategic plan and programs. The response will be comprehensive (including prevention, testing, care and support, work place issues, mitigation of the impact of the epidemic on the education system and management of the response to the epidemic), integrated (at all levels of the education system, including linkages between its different components and with other sectors), and efficient (program management). In particular, it will continue the process of integrating HIV/AIDS into life skills education and will develop and maintain a high level of HIV/AIDS awareness among students, parents, teachers and managers. An initial visit by MTT/West will help to better define specific areas of intervention and provide recommendations that will be available for this assessment team to review and determine how they functionally fit within the broader recommendations that come out of this activity

IV. SCOPE OF WORK

The contractor shall meet with relevant education partners and review and analyze documents relating to the impact of USAID/Benin's basic education program and recommend viable options for a follow-on program.

Specifically, the contractor shall:

- Assess sustainability issues as they pertain to the technical assistance and training USAID has provided to support school district operations and in-service training of teachers under a grant to a US NGO;
- Assess the implementation and the performance of the new study program in private schools, compare findings with the experience in public schools;
- Review the outcomes of the focus groups discussions documents and other relevant documents to propose viable options;
- Consult literature on education programs elsewhere in Africa and other continents for information on the experiences with education programs in similar circumstances to the Benin context;
- Assess the current teacher training model as applied in Benin and recommend changes, if appropriate;
- Identify constraints affecting the reform and recommend short and long-term solutions;
- Assess the impact and relevance of the USAID/Benin education program, specifically in terms of its objectives, expected results, approach, and the strategy adopted;
- Determine the value added by the USAID/Benin education program, at the central level as well as the regional and local levels, given the constraining social, economic and political factors at work in the Benin education system;
- Determine whether the results that USAID/Benin obtained justify the level of USG resources invested in the education program in Benin, given the constraints and challenges identified above;
- Determine the viability of the current education system in Benin. Assess the risks of having recurrent dysfunctions in the system; the corruption index implications to strategic recommendations; and their impact on USAID/Benin education program;
- Assess the USAID/Benin Basic Education Team's (BET) proposed bridging activities for the period of 2005-2007 and propose recommendations if appropriate;
- Review BET indicators and assess relevance to the primary education sector and the current SO statement with corresponding IRs, taking into account the Transformational Development education goals, objective and indicators as outlined above. Where appropriate, propose new indicators that adequately measure USAID/Benin's achievements;

- Determine areas in the education sector where USAID/Benin has an advantage and can achieve significant and sustainable results specifically as they fit within the Transformational Development guidelines. Identify key conditions that must be in place for the proposed results to be obtained and the proposed strategic options to succeed. Consider other donor activities in the primary education sector in Benin;
- Identify any areas for further research or study as appropriate and that fit within the Transformational Development guidelines outlined above;
- Meet with USAID/Benin funded partners: Creative Associates International Inc.(CAII), International Foundation for Education and Self Help (IFESH), CARE International, World Education, World Learning;
- Meet with other stakeholders, including USAID/Benin SO teams working in Governance and Family Health; major players in the education sector including- the World Bank, UNICEF, the Danish Cooperation, the French Cooperation, the Swiss Cooperation, Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, and other agencies-i.e. in the health donor coordination group and the governance donor coordination group; and
- At the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MEPS), the consultants shall work closely with officials from the Directorate of Planning and Projection (DPP), the Directorate of Primary Education (DEP), the Directorate of Pedagogical Inspection (DIP) and the “Cellule de Généralisation des Nouveaux Programmes” (CGNPE). These units will designate their contact persons.

Expected Outcomes of the evaluation

The following outcomes are expected from of this evaluation and related tasks:

- The impact of USAID assistance to support the Educational Reform in Benin is assessed. The context of the education system in Benin is analyzed and viable options for interventions are proposed;
- Sustainability issues of school districts operation and support to teachers with reference to the assistance provided by USAID under the current strategy are addressed;
- Implementation and performance of the new study program in private schools are assessed;
- The constraints that affect the reform are identified and solutions that might help resolve problems in the short and long term are proposed;
- Current teacher training model assessed;
- The BET proposed bridging activities for the period of 2005-2007 assessed for relevance with recommended alternatives;

- Current BET indicators reviewed specifically within the guidance of the recommended goals, objectives and indicators outlined above;
- Critical intervention areas and strategies in the education sector identified; specifically areas where USAID has an advantage and can achieve significant and sustainable results over a two to three year horizon will be recommended;
- A results framework is proposed;

V. PROPOSED COMPOSITION OF TEAM

The contractor is requested to provide a team of consultants to undertake the tasks identified in the Statement of Work. USAID/Benin suggests a team of four consultants with the following background and roles:

- The first consultant may be an education specialist who will direct the team and be the senior consultant/team leader.
- The second consultant may be a social science specialist (behavioral scientist) who will work under the direction of the senior consultant.
- The third consultant a community development expert regionally or locally recruited with good knowledge of primary education systems in the region and preferably with specific attention to Benin.
- The fourth consultant will be recruited from the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education and will work under the supervision of the senior consultant.

The senior consultant and the local consultant from the Ministry will work for an estimated period of approximately six weeks. The social science specialist and the community development expert will work for approximately four weeks. Virtual and actual support to the evaluation team will be provided by USAID/AFR/SD/ED and USAID/EGAT in Washington, DC, to work with the evaluation team to shape the evaluation findings and recommendations into strategic guide. A member of the USAID/Benin Basic Education Team (BET) will also be part of the evaluation team to facilitate contacts and provide background information. The Duty Post for this assignment will be Cotonou and other areas in Benin as deemed appropriate.

Suggested Roles of Consultants

The senior consultant, education specialist (expatriate) - will be responsible for directing the evaluation team and may coordinate the team's production of intervention options for USAID/Benin primary education program for the period covering FY 2007 to FY 2011. The senior consultant must possess a Masters Degree or equivalent in the Social Sciences or Education with at least seven years of work experience in the education sector. S/he shall have solid experience as an analyst in human capacity development. It is preferable that s/he be knowledgeable of the Benin education system or be familiar with similar situations in West

Africa with strong working experience in Francophone Africa. Previous team leadership experience is preferred.

The social scientist consultant (expatriate)-may address social-cultural and behavior issues and analyses for the development of the report. The social scientist shall preferably possess a Masters Degree in the Social Sciences (Sociology, Anthropology, or other related fields). S/he must be familiar with the education sector and more specifically demonstrate extensive experience in policy and gender analysis in a social sector, preferably in education. Solid skills in conducting social soundness analyses (a background in PLA methodology would be useful) and in analysis of pedagogical systems would be helpful.

The community development expert (recruited regionally or locally)-may assess the role of communities and local elected officials in education and the relations between communities and districts and regional education officials. Specifically, this person must have experience and expertise in other educational development programs in the region with a working knowledge of education program successes in general. The community development expert shall have a bachelors' degree, but preferably a Masters Degree in Social Sciences, community development or related fields. S/he shall have at least five years of experience as an analyst in community development and ample knowledge of education systems in development contexts similar to Benin.

Local consultant (recruited from Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education)- assist the senior consultant in assessing the education system. S/he shall assist in better understanding the Benin primary education system, serves as liaison between the team and the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education. S/he will also assist in finalizing the English and French versions of the report. S/he shall hold a Masters Degree in Education or Social Sciences. S/he will have competency in English at the FSI 3, preferably FSI 4 level.

Language requirements:

The senior consultant shall be fluent in English at the FSI 5 level, and French, preferably at the FSI 5 level.

Except for the local consultant the other international consultants shall be fluent in English at the FSI 5 level, and French, preferably at the FSI 3 level.

VI. REPORTING REQUIRMENTS

At the conclusion of the evaluation, the contractor shall provide USAID/Benin a report that is consistent with the scope of work and the expected outcomes. The report shall document the accomplishments of the USAID basic education program under the current country strategy. The report will address the strengths and weaknesses of the education program; and recommend options for the future orientation of the USAID education program in Benin. In addition, the report will include scenario planning based on historical funding levels (which at present USAID/Benin does not expect to change.) Options should include a historical level scenario adjusted to fit the realities of the Benin context and a 25% higher funding scenario compared to historical levels and be based on USAID/Benin experience and comparative advantage. Proposed options must take into consideration constraints in the education sector in Benin which are

beyond the ability to be influenced by USAID/Benin and other donors, and also successful experiences with education programs elsewhere. The report shall contain an executive summary limited to 3 pages, description of methodologies used, findings, conclusions and recommendations. Appendices should include a list of documents and contacts consulted along with a copy of the workplan, statement of work and biographical information for each of the consultants.

Reporting Timetable

Work Plan- The contractor shall submit a detailed work plan within four to five working days after arrival, for review and approval by USAID/Benin CTO.

Briefing- Within the first two days of arrival, the contractor shall have a meeting with key USAID/Benin personnel including USAID/Benin Mission Director.

Periodic Meetings- The contractor shall hold meetings with the BET and other appropriate staff as necessary to discuss issues and progress.

Preliminary Draft- The team will present the first draft of the options to USAID/Benin at the end of four weeks from the start date. The draft will be reviewed in a joint meeting that will include officials from the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education. Based on the discussions, the contractor will incorporate feedback from this meeting into the second draft for presentation a week later. This copy should be presented in French and English.

Second Draft- The second draft containing executive, summary, findings, conclusion and recommendations which will be presented at the end of the fifth week will also be in French and English. This meeting will include a debriefing from the contractor to the BET and the USAID/Benin Mission Director. The second draft will be reviewed by USAID/Benin and the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education. Comments will be forwarded to the contractor within five working days after receipt of the draft.

Final Report- Five days after the contractor receives comments from USAID/Benin, s/he shall provide USAID/Benin with a concise final report that addresses on the scope of work, problem analysis, development hypothesis and the approaches employed in producing the options. The main part of the document will not exceed 30 pages (English version, Word 2000, Times New Roman 12, single space). The final version of the report shall be submitted in three (3) original copies (French & English each) with a CD for each language, to the USAID CTO.

VII. RELATIONSHIP WITH USAID/BENIN

The USAID CTO will provide technical direction.

VIII. SELECTION CRITERIA

Experience in conducting similar evaluations: 50 points

Experience in Education: 20 points

Methodology: guide and approach used to conduct assignment: 30 points

IX. LOGISTICS

The contractor will arrange for transportation in Cotonou, Porto-Novo and the immediate environs. S/he will arrange for office space, secretarial and logistical support and communication. In addition, the team leader will be responsible for the draft and final reports as well as other documented expenses associated with the completion of this assignment.

USAID/Benin will provide facilities for periodic meetings with the Mission staff. USAID will not provide computer access; consultants will be responsible for providing laptops for the period of the consultancy.

USAID will provide one vehicle for travel outside of the immediate environs of Cotonou and Porto-Novo. A USAID/Benin staff member will accompany the team for this travel.

X. PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE

The evaluation should begin o/a June 20, 2005 and last 40 days. Six-week workdays are allowed.

XI. SUGGESTED BACKGROUND MATERIALS

USAID/Benin FY2005 Annual Report

USAID/Benin Education Focus Group Interview Report, 2004

USAID/Benin Bridging Activities Justification, 2005

Evaluation of Benin's Basic Education Reform Pedagogical Component report, 2003

EPT - Diagnosis of the Education System, 2003

Decentralization Study reports

Decentralization of the Education system, 2000

World Education: "Project Evaluation - Primary Education NGO Project (PENGOP)", June 2003

Education Orientation Law, 2003

Civil Society Strengthening Program in Benin, 1993-2000, December 2001

Need Assessment Study for the School Districts in Benin

CARE: "Baseline study of girls' school enrollment in the Gogounou and Kalalé areas," November-December 2001

World Learning: "Mid-term Evaluation Report", September 2004

Private Schools: "Diagnosis Study of Private Education in Benin"

IFESH: "Mid-term Evaluation of the Primary Education Teacher Training project Phase 2 March 2004"

MCDI: "Mid-term Evaluation of the Health Education in Primary Schools (HEPS) project", 2002

EQUIPE (Milestone 11): "Minister of Primary and Secondary School (MEPS) institutional analysis", to be produced in 2004

EQUIPE: “Study on community behaviors and practices in relation to sexuality and HIV/AIDS and the appropriate teaching terminology”, December 2003
USAID/Benin New HIV/AIDS Strategy Document

XII. IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS

Creative Associates

EMI Systems

Care International

World Education

World Learning

International Foundation for Education and Self-Help (IFESH)

Research Triangle Institute (RTI)

Catholic Relief Services

Annex XII: Point de la production des guides de formation (Production of Training Guides)

| Document | Année | Financement de la rédaction | Financement de l'impression | Exemplaires imprimés | Assistance technique |
|---|--------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---|-----------------------------|
| Guide de l'apprenant CI Guide du formateur | 1999 | Projet CLEF/USAID | USAID | 5.000 5.000 | Projet CLEF |
| Guide de l'apprenant CP Guide de l'apprenant CI Guide de l'apprenant Directeur Guide du formateur | 2000 | Projet CLEF/USAID | USAID | 5.000 5.000 5.000 1.000 | Projet CLEF |
| Guide de l'apprenant CE1 Guide de l'apprenant CP Guide de l'apprenant ND ¹² Guide de l'apprenant AD ¹³ Guide du formateur | 2001 | IQC/USAID | IQC/USAID | 5.000 5.000 2.200 4.500 1.000 | CLEF/IQC |
| Guide de l'apprenant CE2 Guide de l'apprenant CE1 Guide de l'apprenant ND Guide du formateur | 2002 | IQC/USAID | EQUIPE/USAID | 5000 5.000 1.500 1.000 | CLEF/IQC |
| Guide de l'apprenant CM1 Guide de l'apprenant CE2 Guide de l'apprenant ND Guide du formateur | 2003 | EQUIPE/USAID | EQUIPE/USAID | 5.000 5.000 1.500 1.000 | Projet EQUIPE |
| Guide de l'apprenant CM2 Guide de l'apprenant CM1 Guide de l'apprenant ND Guide du formateur | 2004 | EQUIPE/USAID | EQUIPE/USAID | 6.500 6.500 1.000 1.000 | Projet EQUIPE |

¹² ND : nouveaux directeurs¹³ AC : Anciens directeurs

Les programmes sont produits par l' INFRE (MEPS)

Programmes d'études du CI : 70 000

Programmes d'études du CP : 70 000

Programmes d'études du CE₁ : 60 000

Programmes d'études du CE₂: 50 000

Programmes d'études du CM₁: 50.000

Programmes d'études du CM₂: 30.000

Annex XIII: Point de la production des guides d'enseignement (Production of Teaching Guides)

| Document | Année | Financement de la rédaction | Financement de l'impression | Exemplaires imprimés | Assistance technique |
|--|--------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Guides d'enseignement du CI (Français, Mathématique, EST, ES, EPS, EA, Evaluation) | 1999 | Projet CLEF/USAID | USAID | 70.000 | Projet CLEF |
| Guides d'enseignement du CP (Français, Mathématique, EST, ES, EPS, EA, Evaluation) | 2000 | Budget national (BN) | USAID | 70.000 | Projet CLEF |
| Guides d'enseignement du CE ₁ (Français, Mathématique, EST, ES, EPS, EA, Evaluation) | 2001 | Projet CLEF/USAID | CLEF/USAID | 70.000 | Projet CLEF |
| Guides d'enseignement du CE ₂ (Français, Mathématique, EST, ES, EPS, EA, Evaluation) | 2002 | BN/CLEF/USAID | IQC/USAID | 70.000 | CLEF/IQC |
| Guides d'enseignement du CM ₁ (Français, Mathématique, EST, ES, EPS, EA, Evaluation) | 2003 | BN/CLEF/USAID | EQUIPE/USAID | 60.000 | CLEF/IQC |
| Guides d'enseignement du CM ₂ (Français, Mathématique, EST, ES, EPS, EA, Evaluation) | 2004 | Budget national | EQUIPE/USAID | 50.000 | Projet EQUIPE |

**Annex XIV: Point de la production des manuels de mathématique et de français, des planches et des cahiers d'activités
(Production of Math and French Manuals and Workbooks)**

| Document | Année | Financement de la rédaction | Financement de l'impression | Exemplaires imprimés | Assistance technique |
|---------------------------------|--------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Manuel de français du CI | 1999 | Projet CLEF/USAID | USAID | 160.000 | Projet CLEF |
| Manuel de mathématique du CI | 1999 | Projet CLEF/USAID | USAID | 160.000 | Projet CLEF |
| Cahiers d'activités de fran. CI | 1999 | Projet CLEF/USAID | CLEF/USAID | 320.000 | Projet CLEF |
| Cahiers d'activités de math. CI | 1999 | Projet CLEF/USAID | CLEF/USAID | 320.000 | Projet CLEF |
| Planches format A3 | 1999 | Projet CLEF/USAID | CLEF/USAID | 120 000 | Projet CLEF |
| Planches format A4 | 1999 | Projet CLEF/USAID | CLEF/USAID | 240 000 | Projet CLEF |
| Manuel de français du CP | 2000 | Budget national(BN) | CLEF/USAID | 160.000 | Projet CLEF |
| Manuel de math. du CP | 2000 | Budget national | CLEF/USAID | 160.000 | Projet CLEF |
| Cahiers d'activités de fran. CP | 2000 | Budget national | CLEF/USAID | 320.000 | Projet CLEF |
| Cahiers d'activités de math. CP | 2000 | Budget national | CLEF/USAID | 320.000 | Projet CLEF |
| Manuel de français du CE1 | 2001 | Projet CLEF/USAID | CLEF/USAID | 150.000 | Projet CLEF |
| Manuel de mathématique du CE1 | 2001 | Projet CLEF/USAID | CLEF/USAID | 150.000 | Projet CLEF |
| Manuel de français du CE2 | 2001-2 | BN/CLEF/USAID | IQC/USAID | 120.000 | CLEF/IQC |
| Manuel de mathématique du CE2 | 2001-2 | BN/CLEF/USAID | IQC/USAID | 120.000 | CLEF/IQC |
| Manuel de français du CM1 | 2003 | Budget national | Equipe/USAID | 100.000 | Projet EQUIPE |
| Manuel de mathématique du CM1 | 2003 | Budget national | Equipe /USAID | 100.000 | Projet EQUIPE |
| Manuel de français du CM2 | 2004 | Projet EQUIPE | Equipe /USAID | 90.000 | Projet EQUIPE |
| Manuel de math du CM2 | 2004 | Projet EQUIPE | Equipe /USAID | 90.000 | Projet EQUIPE |